

WILL D. DESMOND

HEGEL'S ANTIQUITY



CLASSICAL PRESENCES

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CLASSICAL PRESENCES

Attempts to receive the texts, images, and material culture of ancient Greece and Rome inevitably run the risk of appropriating the past in order to authenticate the present. Exploring the ways in which the classical past has been mapped over the centuries allows us to trace the avowal and disavowal of values and identities, old and new. *Classical Presences* brings the latest scholarship to bear on the contexts, theory, and practice of such use, and abuse, of the classical past.

Hegel's Antiquity

WILL D. DESMOND

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Abbreviations

I have used the translations listed here unless otherwise indicated. Any unattributed translations are my own.

- EL* Hegel (1991). *Encyclopaedia Logic*, tr. T.F. Geraets, W.A. Suchting, and H.S. Harris. Hackett.
- EM* Hegel (1971). *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, tr. W. Wallace and A.V. Miller, revised by M.J. Inwood. Oxford.
- EN* Hegel (1970). *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature*, Vols. I–III, ed. and tr. M.J. Petry. Oxford.
- EPS* *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, comprising *EL*, *EM*, *EN*
- ETW* Hegel (1975). *Early Theological Writings*, tr. T.M. Knox and R. Kroner. University of Pennsylvania.
- LA* Hegel (1998). *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, Vols I–II, tr. T.M. Knox. Oxford.
- LH* Hegel (1956). *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, tr. J. Sibree. Dover.
- LP* Hegel (1995). *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vols 1–3, tr. E. S. Haldane, Intro. by F.C. Beiser. University of Nebraska.
- LR* Hegel (1984–7). *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Vols I–III, tr. R. F. Brown, P.C. Hodgson, J.M. Stewart. Oxford.
- NL* Hegel (1999). *On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law*, in *Political Writings*, tr. L. Dickey. Cambridge, 102–80.
- PR* Hegel (2008). *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, tr. T.M. Knox, revised by S. Houlgate. Oxford.
- PS* Hegel (1977). *Phenomenology of Spirit*, tr. A.V. Miller. Oxford.
- SL* Hegel (2010). *Science of Logic*, tr. G. di Giovanni. Cambridge.

Just as Antaeus renewed his powers by touching Mother Earth, so has every revival and reinvigoration of science and culture emerged into the light out of a return to antiquity. . . . The progress of culture should not be seen as the calm prolongation of a chain, to whose earlier links the succeeding ones are joined—carefully to be sure, but made from their own material and not forged to match the earlier work. Rather, culture must have an earlier material and objective stuff upon which it labours, which it transforms and shapes anew. It is necessary that we acquire the world of antiquity, to such a degree that we possess it—and even more, so that we can assimilate and transform it.

—Hegel, Rectoral Address to Nürnberg
Gymnasium, 29 September 1809

Drive your cart and your plow over the bones of the dead.

—William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, 1790

1

Hegel and the Ancient World

A journey to Italy was still in his thoughts. He said, 'A man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority, from his not having seen what it is expected a man should see. The grand object of travelling is to see the shores of the Mediterranean. On those shores were the four great empires of the world: the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. All our religion, almost all our law, almost all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean.' The General observed, that 'The MEDITERRANEAN would be a noble subject for a poem.'

—Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, 11 April 1776.

1.1. Between Old and New

Habent sua fata libelli pro captu lectoris. The proverb that fate carries books far beyond the lifetime and intentions of their authors had become a cliché even in antiquity. And yet when he described a book as an orphan thrown among strangers, could Plato have anticipated his handling by later Church Fathers, Renaissance humanists, or German Idealists? Could Catullus have guessed that his 'trifles' would be translated by Raleigh in the Tower of London, and given over to a romantic Yeats or Modernist Pound? Such stories could be multiplied indefinitely, as the works of a Homer, Pheidias, or Tacitus were carried through such 'dark places of the earth' as Germania or 'strange and distant' Britannia.¹ Indeed, if every event has its afterlife and 'fate', then the trajectory of each ancient phenomenon can become an object of investigation, as it is summoned and re-summoned before the judgment of memory, used and reused in the most unexpected ways: a temple-column supports the roof of a church, mythic exemplars haunt the imagination of an

¹ McPeck's title, *Catullus in Strange and Distant Britain* (1939).

avant-garde rebel. The rise of 'reception studies' tracking each detail and nuance would have surprised the ancients, no matter how mindful of the caprices of fate.

If so, they might have been doubly astonished by the Faustian ambitions of one man to sum up the books, art-works, ideas, and actions of all the past, to show the inner unity of all world-history hitherto and so to rewrite all books, including the 'book' of Nature, into one comprehensive volume. Yet one might thus characterize the ambitions of George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831).² As he ordered his thoughts in lectures and published books, it would seem that nothing less than an exposition of all modes of consciousness, nothing less than an encyclopedia of all knowledge, nothing less than a science of the whole would suffice. Such a synthesis would be Janus-like, at once the founding act of a new order and a recapitulation of all that had gone before, marking its end and culmination, a 'revolution-making work'.³ This book of books and key to all histories would *a fortiori* embrace all essential truths from the Greek and Roman worlds, integrating them into a compact whole to educate subsequent generations, and orient later reworkings and deeper syntheses.

Despite his ambitions, Hegel did not 'take Fate by the throat'. His difficult synthesis became a bone of contention among Left, Middle, and Right Hegelians; his ideas were divided among admirers and mockers, his words 'modified in the guts of the living'. Questions of what is 'living and dead' in Hegel's thought have been asked for over a century,⁴ yet before each wave of scepticism, his ideas seem to revive, Phoenix-like, and surprise with their continued relevance. Or to switch metaphors, Hegel like Socrates often re-emerges as a 'midwife' for new ideas, even while his system loses its direct appeal. Hegel's continued relevance stems partly from the fact that his age was very much the crucible of the modern world. Its preoccupations—revolution, progress, nationalism, romanticism, secularism, historicism, evolution, science—continue to resonate into the present. In synthesizing many voices of his time, Hegel has been characterized as the first to take modernity itself as his theme, as if his main question were, 'What is this

² On Hegel as a Faustian figure, see R.C. Tucker 2017: 31–56; cf. Bubner 2003: 259–263, Mure 1940: ix; A. Wood 1990: 7.

³ For T.S. Kuhn, a 'revolution-working text' is 'at once the culmination of a past tradition and the source of a novel future tradition' (1957: 135).

⁴ See Croce 1969 [1906], Findlay 1958, Kainz 1996: 144–51, Deligiorgi 2006 et al.

modern world now coming to birth in the death-throes of the *ancien régime*?⁵

Yet as a thinker of modernity Hegel is peculiar, for to the revolutionary's zeal for novelty he adds an abiding reverence for the past.⁶ This duality might be symbolized by the fact that he entered the Stuttgart Gymnasium in the eventful year of 1776. That single year, in which a six-year-old Hegel was launched on a curriculum of ancient texts, saw the publication of the American Declaration of Independence, Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the second edition of Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, the third and final voyage of Captain Cook, the conception of Gauss, the births of Niebuhr and Constable, the death of Hume. Each of these events signals in its own way a revolution and opening of a new world: a new republic in the Americas; a new science of political economy; a new discipline of documentary history; a new discipline of art history; a new era of European colonization; new algebraic perspectives and non-Euclidean geometries; a new critical historiography, a new impressionistic naturalism, and, most generally, a mushrooming confidence in the human understanding—its power to surpass limits and know all things.

This Enlightenment self-confidence grew in strength, not least among those for whom Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) and later critiques had effected not only a 'Copernican Revolution' but a final liberation: the heteronomous authorities of God, nature, and tradition were replaced by the autonomous reason and spontaneous imagination of the human self; no longer would mankind search external nature or sacred custom for fundamental laws, purposes, and beauty, for these arise only in dependence on the transcendental self. Kant thus seemed to sum up the tendency to enthrone the human mind as the creative centre of experience—and even to apotheosize mankind. His ideas seemed to herald the culminating revolution in human affairs: the 'meagre, stale, forbidding ways/of custom, law and statute' would be swept aside, the Age of Criticism would usher in a fully free, rational society, and mankind would perfect itself in the audacity of thought.⁷ Only a few contrarians felt in Kant's tracts the drops of the coming storm: the nihilistic egoism, the rage against objective value, the violence and

⁵ Hegel *first* and/or greatest thinker of modernity: e.g. Avineri 1974: x; Habermas 1985: 43; A. Wood 1990: 5; Pinkard 2000: 562–600, 660, Speight 2008: 1.

⁶ 'He is a revolutionary with his eyes fixed on the past' (Mure 1940: x); 'between tradition and revolution' (Riedel, 1984).

⁷ Wordsworth, *Prelude* 11.108–11. Age of Criticism: Kant 1991b: 1781 Preface.

revolutionary terror of this brave new world.⁸ Such ambiguities would not be lost on the mature Hegel, who recognized his age as both a 'birth-time' and a time for death: as Hegel was in the throes of bringing forth his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the Holy Roman Empire was dissolving before revolutionary forces.⁹

'Philosophy is its own time summarized in thought', and as a thinker of modernity, Hegel was well aware of the complexities and contradictions of his time—a veritable battlefield between new and old. But the battle lines were not immediately obvious, and it is remarkable how resolutely Hegel turned to the past, even to forgotten or despised moments of the distant past, to understand what might be of enduring worth in the present. A sometime student of Winckelmann, Hume, Smith, Gibbon, Kant, Niebuhr, and many others, he made titanic efforts to harmonize the many voices of his time into a more perfect union. Yet his own sense of historical relevancy stretches far beyond the pressing clamour of the day. In his vision, Being is one, the present grows organically out of all the past, and modern peoples can know and *be* themselves only when fully cognizant of the pasts that still constitute them. Therefore, Hegel will go as far back as he can, seeking the inner relation between the most ancient traditions and their most up-to-date heirs. This essential continuity between past and present endures even through shattering revolutions: in reflecting on different aspects of modernity, Hegel will draw richly and insistently on the four epochs into which he divides history—the Oriental, Greek, Roman, and Germanic worlds. Here 'Germanic' is typical shorthand for post-classical medieval and modern Europe, 'Oriental' for pre-classical eastern cultures from the Levant to China. At the centre of this fourfold are the terms 'Greece' and 'Rome': two terms that were becoming increasingly, almost inevitably, coupled, and that Hegel too will join intimately—and sharply differentiate.

1.2. A Historical Trio: Germany, Italy, Greece

To set the background for the theme of this book—Hegel's complex appropriation of Greece and Rome in relation to his times and thought—let us look at the trio of places that have loomed so large in the modern German

⁸ These doubters include Jacobi, de Quincy, Heine (cf. Pinkard 2000: 90–9, Beiser, 2005: 31–2). Storm-drops: Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* I.4.

⁹ His own age as 'a birth-time and a period of transition to a new era': *PS* §11.

imagination. Lombardy is closer to Bavaria than to Sicily and from times immemorial northern peoples have been crossing the Alps into Italy, for booty, land, salvation, beauty, or a break. Teutones and Cimbri first unsettled the Romans with the threat of blonde giants bursting forth from the forests of the 'populous North'. Fifty years later, Caesar reported of certain *Germani* across the Rhine, and Tacitus' *Germania* would shape their modern image as noble savages whose indomitable freedom shamed the decadence of Rome. The *terror cimbricus* returned to terrorize Marcus Aurelius' reign when the Marcomanni crossed the Alps and besieged Aquileia—the first drop of the coming storm, when during the *Völkerwanderung*, Goths, Vandals, Lombards, Franks, and all the North's 'barbarous Sons / Came like a Deluge on the South, and spread / Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands',¹⁰ even sacking Rome itself in 410 and 455 AD. The city of Rome would diminish, yet the idea of Rome endured, and in centuries to come, after *Gallia Cisalpina* became Lombardy, and Charlemagne took its Iron Crown, the Holy Roman Empire would continue to straddle, uneasily, the Alps, with jurisdictions fluctuating from the North Sea to Sicily. Italy still pulled northerners south—Carolingians, Saxons, Salians—and along with warriors and kings came traders, pilgrims, and priests.

A new era begins to open in 1510 when Luther visited the Papal States: his anger at Roman extravagance would contribute to the sack of the city in 1527 by an army of renegade Lutheran *Landsknechte*. Lutheran rage against the Papacy's beautiful idols would be replaced, in turn, by a different kind of *Drang nach Süden* from the Baroque era, as northern nobles trooped south on their English grand tours or German *Kavalierreisen*, armed with guide-books and baggage trains, invading palaces, churches, and private collections for glimpses and trophies of Italian art.¹¹ Artists themselves were drawn to the holy ground where Giotto, Michelangelo, and Raphael had worked. Dürer blazed a trail to Italy and, in coming centuries, Germans like Friedrich Müller, Tischbein, Schinkel, and the Nazarenes followed Bruegel, Rubens, Velázquez, Reynolds, Turner, and so many others to visit the hallowed artistic spaces of Italy. Campo Santo, Pisa, Florence, Siena. Venice, Naples, and, above all, Rome were such treasure-hoards of masterpieces that Canova was only stating a fact when he called Italy 'the land of art', or when Hegel made Renaissance Italy the land of painting. It was also the 'land of music' and opera, though in the 1700s the baton was passing

¹⁰ Milton, *Paradise Lost* 1.353–5.

¹¹ On the grand tour, see Wilton and Bignamini 1996, Chard 1999, and Constantine 2001.

slowly north: in the free movement of Italians north and Germans south, Mozart visited Italy three times, Haydn spoke fluent Italian, Rossini (Hegel's favourite composer) was nicknamed 'little German' (*il Tedeschino*) for his admiration of Mozart, while Liszt would still opine that 'the yearning for Italy will always be an affliction for beautiful souls'.¹² From Cimbrian 'barbarians' to Romantic culture-vultures: given the rich history of interactions across the Alps, one can appreciate why Hegel and his contemporaries tended to take the pairing of 'German' and 'Roman' as a natural one.¹³

More specific to the years around 1776 are associations of Italy with the 'beautiful South'. For (it was often said) once the sublime Alps are crossed, a beautiful new world opens up. Gone are the pines, mist, wooden houses, and dour faces: the sky brightens to sunshine, the plains and valleys are filled with fruit and vines, the people are lively and sensuous, talking, singing, playing music, and dancing, in piazzas, churches, and mountain villages—the most beautiful landscapes and cityscapes. Even in its poverty, chaos, and ruins, this Italy seemed alternately beautiful and sublime, 'the land of wonders' where travellers might refresh themselves with beakers 'full of the warm South, full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene'. Whether this marvellous South existed in Umbria, Provence, Helicon, or the viewless realms of Poesy would be too pedantic to ask, and a rounded country squire like Brooke of *Middlemarch* was not overly fastidious in his recollections of what he saw, when as an adventurous youth in Italy he 'went into' the study of the antique—ruins, statues, 'that kind of thing, you know'.¹⁴ This Brooke of *Middlemarch* always knew 'when to pull up', as he was fond of saying, and didn't take Italy too much to heart. For others, by contrast, Italy was an epiphany and an affliction: the 'Stendhal Syndrome' takes its name from the dizziness and heart palpitations that Stendhal suffered when he first visited Florence and found himself surrounded by such sudden, ubiquitous beauty.

No modern people have proved so susceptible to an Italian syndrome as the Germans. So many travellers went forth, or came back, intoxicated with

¹² Tieck's yearning for Italy as 'das gelobten Land der Kunst' and as the 'Kunstheimat' (*Herzenergießungen*) is amply reflected in Mahr 1996. 'Land of music': e.g. 'Music in Italy' in *Foreign Quarterly Review* (1842, April–July), pp. 260–6.

¹³ See, for example, *LH 400* or the cultural vision in Ranke's *Geschichte der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514* (1824).

¹⁴ 'Land of wonders': Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Chapter 1. Eliot's *Middlemarch* was published in 1872 but set in 1829–32. For German fascination with Italy (as with Eliot's Naumann), see e.g. Hausmann, Knoche, and Stammerjohann 1996, Wiegand 2004, and Hachmeister 2002; Barzini 1996: 1–40 offers a humorous Italian perspective on 'Romantic' tourists (including an earnest Goethe).

Italy—or with images of Italy—that the German language gained a specific term for the malady: *Italiensehnsucht*, the ‘ache for Italy’. Indeed, the type was recognizable enough that George Eliot’s Rome features Naumann and other ‘long-haired German artists’, whose ‘vigorous enthusiasm’ threatens to revolutionize taste across Europe.¹⁵ From the year of Hegel’s birth, such ‘German-Romans’ (*Deutschrömer*) could go forth armed with Johann Volkmann’s best-selling guidebook, with its expert tips for finding the most beautiful spots.¹⁶ Not all those who went to the ‘land of longing’ (*Land der Sehnsucht*) were ‘aesthetic’ or ‘modern pagans’, and yet—against Mengs, the Nazarenes, Eichendorff, Liszt, and others who yearned for the beauties of Catholic Italy—the two travellers who did most to disseminate the longing for Italy were indeed regarded as ‘pagans’, so thoroughly epitomizing and inspiring German experiences and expectations about antiquity that they were said to be animated by Greek souls.¹⁷ What has come to be called the *Goethezeit* was named by Goethe himself (1749–1832) the ‘Century of Winckelmann’. So in order to further tease out the historical trio of Germany–Italy–Greece that so informs Hegel’s concept of antiquity, let us dwell a moment on these two northern travellers and the South they celebrated.

Winckelmann compared his early life to that of Aeneas. Tormented by fate,¹⁸ he struggled through boyhood poverty but succeeded in teaching himself Greek and much else besides, and by November 1755 finally made it to the shores of his spiritual ‘homeland’. In Rome as a converted Catholic, he worked ultimately for Clement XIII as Prefect of Antiquities (the post held once by Raphael) and German secretary; he met Mengs, Jacques-Louis David, and Robert Adam, like-minded evangelists of neoclassicism; in the villas and palaces of Rome and Naples, and the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum, he gathered the materials and ideas that would be published most influentially in his seminal work of art-history, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764). A strange figure, Winckelmann was driven by a mania for a beauty that he could hardly see in Gothic, Baroque, or Rococo—nor even in Renaissance or Roman art, except insofar as they gave a glimpse of the Greek ‘original’. And yet those glimpses came to him

¹⁵ *Middlemarch* Chap. 19.

¹⁶ ‘Certainly the most popular “guidebook” of its time’ (Hachmeister 2002: 31), Volkmann’s *Historisch-Kritische Nachrichten von Italien* (1770) sounds its keynote with an introductory chapter on ‘The Beauty of Italy’.

¹⁷ For ‘aesthetic’ and ‘modern paganism’, see Hatfield 1964 and Gay 1966.

¹⁸ Cited in Hatfield 1964: 6.

only in Rome and Italy, for he refused several opportunities to travel on to Greece itself, and the closest he came to the 'pure' Greek was in the temples of Paestum. Winckelmann's ambivalent stance towards Italy, Rome, and Greece is captured by Wilamowitz: 'It was his longing for ancient Greece, and for the freedom and beauty for which it stood, that drove him to Italy'.¹⁹

A similar ambiguity attends on Winckelmann's great admirer, Goethe, whose travels to Italy from 1786–8 were published some thirty years later as the *Italianische Reise* (1816, 1817, 1829).²⁰ Aching for release from little Weimar, longing to emulate his father's Italian journey and batten his soul on beauty there, Goethe made his secret preparations and then, one night, without warning, fled, hurtling south across the Alps, travelling incognito and not communicating his whereabouts until safe on the other side, in Verona. According to his own account, he seems to have studiously avoided the beauties of Catholic Italy and went straight for antique sites instead: at Assisi, for example, he sought out only the site of the ancient Temple of Minerva; his 'greatest yearning (*Sehnsucht*) was to read Tacitus in Rome'.²¹ Initially at least, Rome was (as in Volkmann's guidebook) the goal of all journeys, end of all roads, the 'capital of the world', and itself 'a world'.²² In this universal city, Goethe spent three and a half months immersing himself in ancient art and mythology and forming a quasi-Platonic theory of divinity, humanity, and artistic creation. But as he hunted for sources of inspiration, it grew on him that Rome was not Greece and that *fora*, aqueducts, and architecture of 'form-confusing Rome'²³ did as much to obscure as to reveal the deeper spirit of the Greeks. Concluding that the Romans for all their political greatness were only imitators in art, he struck out again for 'the South'. Naples seduced him, with its bend of bay and animated people—as did the frescoed houses in nearby Pompeii and Herculaneum. These lively Neapolitans seemed to Goethe unburdened by so many centuries of history: surely among these southern Italians one could glimpse what mankind was like in the beginning? Surely their cheerfulness, song, their *Kunst-* and *Bilderlust*, their sensuous spontaneity were redolent of the ancient Greeks themselves, who had first colonized the place as *Nea Polis*? Much seemed to confirm in Goethe's imagination that he was nearing

¹⁹ Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1982: 96 (italics added).

²⁰ Trevelyan 1941: 121–78, Boyle 1992: 413–530, Hachmeister 2002: 29–59 are informative.

²¹ *IR*, 130–1, 27 October 1786.

²² *Hauptstadt der Welt: IR*, 14 September 1786. *Rom ist eine Welt: IR*, 13 December 1786.

²³ *Das gestaltverwirrende Rom: IR*, 12 April 1787.

his goal: the Neapolitans were almost Greek, he only needed to travel a little further to touch the heart of things.²⁴

At Paestum, the Doric temples first shocked him with their rough elementality. But reflection allowed him 'in less than an hour' to accept them as 'lofty', in deference to Winckelmann's categorization.²⁵ Venturing even further south, he sailed from Naples to Sicily—to Palermo, and thence to Monreale, Alcamo, and Castelvetro, the temples of Segesta, Selinus, and Agrigento; he climbed through the centre of the island to Caltanissetta, and continued on east to Catania, Taormina, and Messina. Throughout this leg of the Italian journey, the *Odyssey* was his constant companion, and what Homer described so beautifully, he read aloud and strove to see in the Sicily around him. The luxuriant vegetation, mistless skies, and wine-dark sea conjured images of the Phaeacians' gardens and Poseidon's storms; the colourful peasantry brought to mind Nausicaa and the Phaeacians, who also took such spontaneous delight in their 'banquets, music, dancing, changes of raiment, warm baths and the couch'.²⁶ At Palermo, Goethe was unable to find his quasi-Platonic *Urpflanzen* among the specimens of the public gardens, but he stocked his mind with images of the *Urlandschaft* and *Urmenschen* of the South: a wealth of memories for future poetry. He wrote some 175 lines of a tragic *Nausikaa*, but more important were the conclusions that Sicily inspired him to draw about Homer, literature, art, humanity, divinity. Nursing a brew of notions—about the original Forms (*Urformen*) that find variations (*Abweichungen*) in particular species, about Beauty and other Platonic Ideas made manifest in art, about the *Urmenschen* so exhaustively revealed in the circle of gods and heroes in Homer and Greek sculpture, about the superiority of the direct, unadorned Classical style to the sentimental, belaboured modern²⁷—in Italy and above all in Sicily, Goethe came to his famous verdict and manifesto: 'Romanticism is sickness, Classicism is health'.²⁸ Or at least this is how he formulated his ideas in retrospect: Classical and especially 'Greek' Italy had cured him of the laboured *Sturm und Drang*, his own *Werther* and the self-indulgent 'Romanticism' that they presaged. A decisive jolt for the new 'Classicism' he

²⁴ See *IR* entries for Naples, March 1787, with Trevelyan 1941: 151.

²⁵ *IR*, 23 March 1787.

²⁶ *Odyssey* 8.246–9, a passage marked by Goethe (cited in Trevelyan 1941: 162).

²⁷ On this complex of ideas and its 'codification' by K.P. Moritz, see Trevelyan 1941: 162–78; cf. Stanford 1958: 190–4. On Goethe as predecessor to Darwin, see Richards 2002: 407–20 ('evolutionary theory was Goethean morphology running on geological time': 407).

²⁸ On Goethe's later, anti-Romantic editorializing, see Hachmeister 2002: 42, 56–9.

would develop with Schiller in Weimar, the Italian journey was the turning point of Goethe's life and career—with Sicily as its climax and culmination: 'To have seen Italy without having seen Sicily is to not have seen Italy at all, for Sicily is the clue to everything'.²⁹

Goethe's *Italienische Reise* is both a personal document and a cultural phenomenon. It captured and inspired that longing for the 'beautiful South'³⁰ so characteristic of the time. Yet, initially at least, Goethe did not quite know whether his goal lay in Italy, or Rome, or Sicily, or Greece, or elsewhere. 'Do you know the land where the lemon-trees blossom?'³¹ The question of Goethe's Mignon had become proverbial enough by 1826 that it was parodied by Eichendorff, as he set his Taugenichts ('Good For Nothing') scurrying vaguely southwards and asking a bewildered farmer for directions to 'Italy, to Italy, where the pomegranates grow!' As with the young Goethe, the credentials of this Taugenichts are impeccable: he had often listened to the Porter, who 'knew a tremendous deal about world history' and informed him that:

Italy is a beautiful land. There God in His goodness takes care of everything and you can lie on your back in the sunshine and let the raisins fall into your mouth, and if the tarantula bites, you dance with fantastic flexibility, even if you never learned to dance before.³²

So thoroughly tutored, Taugenichts sets off, keeping his eyes wide open so as not to fall asleep or miss even a single second of this marvellous 'Italy' whenever it might first appear. When at length he nears the fabled city of Rome, he remembers the stories he heard as a boy about its golden gates and glimmering towers, how Venus was buried there and how the old heathens would sometimes rise from their graves to roam about, confusing hapless wanderers.

Eichendorff's parody strikes home, for one could say that the legends, sights, tarantella music, and mischievous spirits of Italy did indeed inspire a divine confusion in travellers like Taugenichts, Goethe, and Winckelmann: a yearning conviction that *there*, in some temporal Arcadia, accessible to the

²⁹ *Der Schlüssel zu allem: IR*, 13 April 1787; cf. 12 May 1797 (Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans were all in Sicily); for more on Goethe's guidebooks to Sicily (by Biscari, Riedesel), see Ceserani 2000: 188–92.

³⁰ On the influence of *IR* on Eichendorff, Platen, Heine, and generally, see Hachmeister 2002.

³¹ 'Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühen?' (*Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, III.1).

³² Chapter 3 (my translation; all translations are mine unless otherwise stated).

determined traveller, all is or was perfect. This Arcadian 'South' was perhaps most often associated with Italy—a dominant mood captured by the poster-paintings for the time: Tischbein's *Goethe in the Roman Campagna* (1787), in which Goethe in traveller's garb reclines on a fallen column, ancient ruins behind, his gaze extending to infinity; and, even more, Overbeck's *Italia and Germania* (1828) in which Germania gazes full-eyed at Italia, who bends her head, laurel-crowned, towards her lap, engrossed in her own rich memories.

Yet the spell of Italy was not absolute. At other times, the earthly Arcadia was descried further off—in medieval Christendom, India, or in even more exotic Tahiti. But most of all it was found in Greece, and in the crucial cases of Winckelmann and Goethe, the 'real' South would not be in Italy and Rome, but in *Greek Italy* and Greece itself.³³ The enthusiasm they felt and caused, together with the French Revolution and 'Greek' spirit of liberty, the longing for authenticity, the craving for some this-worldly salvation—all converged in the late 1700s to make Germany the centre for a new philhellenism. The burst of enthusiasm for Greek studies in Germany has been called a second Renaissance, yet it remains a curious fact that such ardent philhellenes as Winckelmann, Herder, Heyne, Goethe, Schiller, Wolf, and Hölderlin never travelled to Greece—some not even to Italy—and fed their imaginations instead on books, journals, reproductions, traveller's reports, and rumours of radiance.³⁴ Yet out of these broken images, they forged a myth that would haunt the German and European imagination down to the twentieth century: sun-washed Aegean islands, lively people, cities like art-works, and a spirit and way of life in perfect harmony with nature, the divine, and, most of all, itself. This beautiful Greece would long beckon as a refuge from the ugly *anomie* of modern life, its cities teeming with nameless masses, powered by pitiless machines.

³³ 'No other geographic location outside of Germany itself plays such a large role in the annals of German literature than does Italy' (Hachmeister 2002: 3). Butler 1935 and Hatfield 1964 disagree, pointing to the hegemony, even 'tyranny', of Greece over the German imagination, though Hatfield equivocates by concluding that 'the German needs the "otherness" of the *Mediterranean* element' (4–5, italics added). Tahiti: Georg Foster (cf. Hatfield 1964: 2 and 1943: 139ff). Medieval Christendom: e.g. Novalis's *Christenheit oder Europa* (1799). India: F. Schlegel's *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808); cf. Willson 1964, Rothermund 1986, Feldman and Richardson 1972: 349–64. The ideal of *Einheit des Lebens* pervading these Romantic arcadias Beiser regards as 'essentially a revival of the classical ideal of the *polis*' (2003: 36).

³⁴ On this Greek 'Renaissance', see e.g. Aron 1929, Hatfield 1964, Wohlleben 1992, Valdez 2014, P. Watson 2010: 91–4, Berry 2009; cf. Jaeger 1945 (three 'humanisms' of Renaissance, *Goethezeit*, twentieth century), Rawson 1969: 306–43.

Hegel never visited Italy or Greece, yet he too absorbed and adapted the myth of the South. He would never relinquish Winckelmann's argument that ancient Greece was 'the land of beauty',³⁵ where geography, climate, political freedom, and world-historical situation conspired to create a pre-eminently aesthetic people. His modern Italians are the people of song, his Venetians rival the Dutch as masters in painting, and his Raphael revived classical perfection in a more Christian guise, but Hegel does not admire Florence or Naples as 'political works of art' like the Greek *poleis*. He does not extol the Italian 'Renaissance' as *the* pinnacle of artistic achievement.³⁶ He does not praise aesthetic Catholicism as one of the richest cradles of art. He fairly ignores the architectural triumphs of imperial Rome. In general, he makes a sharper distinction between Greece and Italy than Winckelmann or Goethe had, and when he turns to ancient Rome, the distinction takes on the appearance of a stark, dialectical opposition: harmonious Greek *poleis* versus the predatory Roman Leviathan, Greece's organic pluralism versus Rome's mechanical unity, Greek imagination versus Roman law, spirited Greek geniuses versus their plodding Roman imitators, beautiful Olympian personalities versus faceless Roman *numina*, Greek *Heiterkeit* versus Roman *gravitas*, Greek 'poetry' versus Roman 'prose'. This dichotomy has been a dominant one, persisting from Horace's *Graecia capta* to the present day.³⁷ In giving his own variation of it, Hegel reflects not only a long cultural consensus, but also the spreading nationalism of his time, with its accent on difference: in the 1820s, while Hegel was professor in Berlin, Mazzini and others were renewing Machiavelli's call for the 'barbarians' to be expelled,

³⁵ *LA*, 1.514.

³⁶ 'The Renaissance' as a revival of antiquity and catalyst for modernity was first properly conceptualized by Michelet, Voigt, and Burckhardt (Watson, 2010: 91–2).

³⁷ Comparisons (*synkrisis*) of Greek and Roman hail from antiquity and typically sharpen the difference between Greek high culture (art, literature, philosophy, science) and Roman practical wisdom (morality, politics, law, work, war): Sallust *Bellum Catilinae* 8, Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.1–3, Virgil *Aeneid* 6.847–53, Horace *Epistles* 2.1.156–7 (cf. E. Fraenkel 1957: 265–6, 388–92); cf. Pliny *Naturalis Historia* 3.5, Aristides' *On Rome* and Tertullian *De Anima* 30. The trope finds modern variations in Voltaire (*Essai sur les mœurs*, I.89); Herder (2002: 289); Gibbon ('the wisdom of Athens... firmly established by the power of Rome' (1994: Chapter 2)); P.B. Shelley (*Hellas*, 'Preface'); Mommsen (*History of Rome*, 1.II); Joyce (*Ulysses*, 'Aeolus'); and Whitehead (2017 [1911]: Chap. 3 *ad fin*). Though it lingers in the popular imagination, the contrast has faded from recent scholarship, as it explores many 'practical' sides of Greek, and 'creative' dimensions of Roman civilizations (e.g. Morton-Braund 2005: 262–3). Yet when MacMullen 2011 sketches 'the Roman character' as not only conservative, tolerant, practical, and aggressive, but also as nationalistic (not speculative), practical (not 'logical'), political (not moralizing), legalistic (not mystical), historical (not storytelling), and religious through rituals (not myths), does he offer a veiled *synkrisis* with the Greeks, that 'race of thinkers' (Heath 1981: I.6)?

and an Italian nation to be founded on an old ideal of *Romanità*; at the same time, Greece was struggling towards freedom through its long War of Independence (1821–32).

The fact that independent Greece was given a Bavarian (Otto I) as its first king highlights the intensifying sense in German-speaking lands that there existed an almost unique spiritual bond between modern Germany and ancient Greece. Here selective enthusiasm could make real similarities seem overwhelming. Both Greek and German languages are inflected and form compounds readily; both teem with particles for nuances of emphasis and mood.³⁸ Both Classical Greek *poleis* and German states were unified culturally but politically disparate. What Schiller quipped about Germany (and Metternich about Italy) could easily be adapted to Archaic or Classical Greece: where on the map are they?³⁹ A mosaic of kingdoms, duchies, principalities, free cities, bishoprics, and abbeys, straddled by the Holy Roman Empire, the Austrian Empire, and Prussia, and spilling out into cities and communities from the Baltic to the Balkans, and from Strasbourg to the Volga, 'Germany' existed more as idea than reality, and before such centralized powers as Napoleonic France, its peculiar powers had to be spiritual rather than material. Germany is the 'land of poets and thinkers', the Greeks were 'the people of art', and so the correspondence between the two seemed almost exact: *Kulturvölker*, loose confederations before an aggressive empire (Rome, France), yet destined to conquer its conquerors by force of innate spiritual energy. Here, not only German literature and philosophy seemed more home-grown, more alive, than the products of French classicism and rationalism; the culture of Protestantism also seemed to recall the freer spirit of Greek religion, in which individuals identified directly with their deities, unhindered by priestly hierarchies. Such simplifications lay behind the widespread intuition that Protestant Germany was to Catholic France what Greece had been to Rome: organic cohesion to mechanical codes of control; creative spontaneity to artificial canons of

³⁸ Among the many contemporary comparative studies of Greek and German listed by J.C. Adelung (1809: 2.441) is J.G. Trendelenburg's *Vergleichung der Vorzüge der deutschen Sprache mit dem Vorzüge der Lateinischen und Griechischen* (1788). Hellenomania could lead to such extraordinary titles as J.W. Kuithan's *Die Germanen und Griechen: Eine Sprache, ein Volk, eine auserweckte Geschichte* (1822–6). Its argument 'that ancient Greeks and modern Germans were the same people and spoke the same language' (Lloyd-Jones 1982: 22) could, under the influence of later ethnology, take on a more racial dimension (see Lloyd-Jones 1982: xviii).

³⁹ Schiller: 'Deutschland? Aber wo liegt es?' (*Xenien* 1796). Metternich: Italy is a mere 'geographical expression'.

'classical' taste; living piety to a ritualistic, statist religion. *Das griechische Reich deutscher Nation*, the Greek Empire of the German Nation: Rehm's phrase captures the sense that, for some of Goethe's time, a Greek Germany was replacing the old 'Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation'.⁴⁰

The assumed continuities and differences encoded in the ratio Greece : Germany :: Rome : France also surface, multifariously, in the dynamic that Hegel places at the heart of world-history.⁴¹ In his fourfold division of history into Oriental, Greek, Roman, and Germanic civilizations, Hegel explores all the various possible couplings of our 'trio': Greek-Roman, Greek-Germanic, and Roman-Germanic. We have seen how his dialectic tends to *oppose* Greek 'poetry' and Roman 'prose'. By contrast, his Greek and Germanic worlds are more obviously *alike*, for, in Hegel's repeated phrase, the Spirit finds itself first 'immediately at home' in Greece.⁴² To translate: educated modern Germans—and not only modern 'pagans' like Winckelmann and Goethe—feel themselves almost immediately at ease with things Hellenic, but need studied imagination to penetrate ancient Persia, India, China, and even imperial Rome. At the same time, there were stereotypical differences posited between Greece and Germany which Hegel also sometimes adapts: Greek spontaneity versus German seriousness, Greek exuberance versus German interiority, Greek aestheticism versus German duty, Greek particularism versus German cosmopolitan universalism.⁴³ As for Rome and Germany, Hegel understands imperial Rome as the

⁴⁰ Rehm 1936: 16, playing on the title *Das Heilige Römische Reich Deutscher Nation*, or in Latin, *Sacrum Romanum Imperium Germanicum* (on whose history, see Wilson 2017: 19). On conceptions of 'Germany' in the early 1800s, see e.g. Bonds 2006: 79–88.

⁴¹ The ratio is perhaps most succinctly illustrated in Ludwig II's Valhalla memorial (1842, but conceived in the early 1800s), with its neo-Hellenic pediments trumpeting the victories of Arminius over the Romans, and of Germania over Napoleon. This Valhalla is open to all 'Germans', i.e. those who *speak* German: a coupling of language and nation that recalls Isocrates' coupling of 'Greekness' and knowledge of the *logos*, i.e. Greek language and literature (*Panegyricus* 49–50). Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* (1808) similarly privilege language when praising Greek-German authenticity over the 'neo-Latin' (*neulateinisch*) languages and peoples (i.e. the French). For more on such associations, see e.g. Pinkard 2000: 274–5, Law 2000: 125–6, Hatfield 1964: ix–x, and Rehm 1936. On the French Enlightenment's fascination with Rome, see Parker 1937: 17–20, Shorey 1938: 153–68, and Norton 1995: 101–4. By contrast, pointing to a different *Zeitgeist*, Yavetz explores why German historians from Niebuhr turned to the history of Rome, not Greece (1976).

⁴² *LP* 2.9–10; cf. *LP* 1.148–52, *LH* 223.

⁴³ Greek spontaneity, Germanic seriousness: e.g. *LA* 2.1221, *LP* 1.427 (on Aristophanes); analogously, A.W. Schlegel contrasts 'the animation of the South' with 'our German seriousness' (1876 [1809]: Preface), and Nietzsche recommends Aristophanes (with Petronius and Bizet) as (Southern) antidotes to Wagnerianism and the (Northern) 'spirit of gravity' (*Beyond Good and Evil*, 28). Greek trickery versus German honesty is a stereotype Hegel does not exploit: he finds in Luther a paragon of German *Redlichkeit* (*LH* 414–15), but does not contrast it with Socrates'

immediate opposite and ground of Germanic Christendom. The Romans' utilitarian religion and force-based politics are opposite to the spirit of Christian harmony, but at the same time Roman discipline, purposiveness, law, and deepening subjectivity prepare for Christianity, which 'Germanic' peoples are destined to perfect into its modern Lutheran form. In exploring these three pairings, Hegel's world-history will be more scholarly and subtle than the creative classicism of Winckelmann and Goethe: Hegel seeks to articulate more precisely both the radical differences and deep continuities between each element of the 'triad' of Greece, Rome, and Germany. In the end, his logical system posits that differences presuppose a deeper 'identity', and so sharp cultural differentiations subsist within a greater, single whole. A single World-Spirit evolves into each national spirit in turn, and these into spirited individuals, who contribute unwittingly to the successive metamorphoses of the greater whole, until comprehensive German minds begin to grasp it more consciously—not least Hegel himself, as he attempted to survey everything and find himself at home there.

1.3. Hegel's Life and Intellectual Development

The Germanic world as the synthesis of Greece and Rome: this central aspect of Hegel's thought can be traced from his Berlin lectures back through his positions in Heidelberg, Nürnberg, Frankfurt, and Bern and even to his student days in Tübingen and Stuttgart—years of much intellectual ferment and experiment. It would be too much to say that he was born at a crossroads of North and South, but it has been remarked that his native Württemberg was a zealously Protestant duchy surrounded by more Catholic Bavaria and Baden.⁴⁴ In any case, his education in the classics began early: his mother taught him some Latin at home; he attended a 'Latin school' from ages 5 to 7, and thereafter until age 17 the Stuttgart Gymnasium Illustre (1776/77–1788). Now the Eberhard-Ludwigs-Gymnasium, the school had been founded in 1686 but by the late 1700s

irony; nor does he pit the Kantian imperative against lying with admired Greek tricksters such as Hermes, Odysseus, Histiaeus of Miletus, or Themistocles of Athens.

⁴⁴ For Hegel, southern, Catholic Germany 'mingles' Romanic and Germanic: *LH* 419–21. Such stereotypes can linger: for E. Wilkinson, Goethe united through his paternal and maternal stocks 'those opposing tendencies that have always prevailed in German lands: the intellectual and moral rigour of the north and the easygoing artistic sensuousness of the south' (1991: 133).

was adapting itself to the prevailing fascination with reason and human perfectibility.⁴⁵ In Rosenkranz's oft-quoted summary, Hegel's education there 'belonged entirely to the Enlightenment with respect to principle, and entirely to classical antiquity with respect to curriculum'.⁴⁶ Certainly this gymnasium education gave him a lasting facility with the two ancient languages. In Latin he wrote a kind of study diary (from roughly 29 July 1785 to 22 March 1786) and an essay *De Utilitate Poeseos*. The remaining records of his book purchases, library borrowings, word-lists, text-preparations, translations, excerpts, and other notes indicate study of a wide range of authors and works, including Homer's *Iliad*, Tyrtæus, Herodotus, Sophocles, Euripides, Thucydides, Isocrates, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Demosthenes' *On the Crown*, Plautus, Catullus, Cicero, Tibullus, Propertius, Livy, Virgil, Tacitus' *Agricola*, Epictetus' *Enchiridion*, Longinus' *On the Sublime*, Gellius, Ausonius, Claudian, as well as Wieland's translation of Horace's *Epistles*.⁴⁷ Rosenkranz saw the fullest evidence of Hegel's industry and concluded that 'one of the largest of these excerpt collections [contains descriptions in Latin of the] life, writings and editions of almost all the ancient authors', including more minor ones such as Polyænus.⁴⁸ In all, Hegel's early linguistic education would allow him later to read both languages easily, to scatter his writings with classical references, to correspond and even to converse in Latin, and to find philosophical depth in individual words; indeed, as a mature pedagogue and thinker he would recommend the ancient languages as propædeutics to abstract logical thought.⁴⁹ Along with the classics, Hegel studied German

⁴⁵ See Harris 1972: 3–6. ⁴⁶ Rosenkranz 1972 [1844]: 10 (cited in Beiser 2005: 8).

⁴⁷ For more details and discussion, see Teysseïre 1960.

⁴⁸ Cited in H.S. Harris 1972: 47.

⁴⁹ Casual references: e.g. Letter to Niethammer, October 1808, quoting Virgil *Aeneid* 1.204 (in Hoffmeister and Nicolin 1961–81: 1.254, Butler and Seiler 1984: 179). Living Latin, conversation: during his gymnasium days, Hegel visited a local Catholic mass in August 1785—perhaps to improve his Latin (Stepelievich 1992: 674–5); in negotiating about possible employment in the Netherlands in December 1809, Hegel was willing to lecture in Latin, 'at least in the beginning' (Butler and Seiler 1984: 588); Pinkard recounts an incident in Berlin where speaking Latin (at midnight, in a rowboat on the Spree) proved handy (2000: 449–50); more respectfully, he delivered two Latin public lectures as Rector in Berlin (Butler and Seiler 1984: 446–7). Convinced of the indirect, 'spiritual' influence of the ancient languages, he defended the classical gymnasium to the Royal General Commissioner of Bavaria (19 September 1810; in Butler and Seiler 1984: 212–13). On the other hand, 'The Kingdom of God is not to be won merely by the incantation of the words of Latin and Greek' (to Niethammer, 7 May 1809; in Butler and Seiler 1984: 198). If language is a means to spiritual ends, Hegel decries (in a letter discussing Thucydides' Pericles) how 'philology has presently entangled itself in such an erudite cobweb-spinning and labour of barren industry' that it risks becoming as useless as the 'science' of heraldry (29 April 1817; in Butler and Seiler 1984: 365). Nevertheless, he continues to

literature, mathematics, physics, philosophical works like Mendelssohn's *Phaedo*, and aesthetical ones such as Batteux's *Einleitung in die schönen Wissenschaften*, whose section on 'epic' was well-thumbed, seemingly.⁵⁰ Industrious, earnest in the pursuit of *Bildung*, yearning for a vocation as a scholar and 'educator of the people' (*Volkserzieher*) like Lessing, he was treated as a kindred soul, almost as a peer by teachers like Löffler. Hindsight thus can discern in his school compositions the seeds of later, broader interests: a dialogue between the triumvirs Antony, Lepidus, and Octavian, exploring republican ideas; an essay 'On the Religion of the Greeks and Romans'; a translation of Sophocles' *Antigone* into German; reflections on Socrates' last words.⁵¹ Among Hegel's favourite books at the time were Schröckh's *Lehrbuch der allgemeinen Weltgeschichte* and Meiners's *Grundriss der Geschichte der Menschheit*—precursors of his later style of holistic, world-historical thinking.⁵²

Upon graduation, Hegel spent five somewhat discontented years in the Tübingen Stift (1788–93). This bastion of conservative Lutheranism did not fully inspire him, and though always first in the gymnasium, his marks in Tübingen were mediocre, while Renz and Schelling were *primi*. His official curriculum for the Baccalaureate included Greek, Latin, history, logic, arithmetic, and geometry; for the Magister (1790), he took the regular curriculum of Greek, Hebrew, logic, mathematics, metaphysics, moral philosophy, natural law, and physics; there were lectures on Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*; Plato was probably included in Bardili's class on 'The Use of Profane Authors in Theology', while the professor of mathematics and physics, Pfleiderer, had a side interest in Greek mathematics.⁵³ The higher ministerial degree in theology took him into biblical and theological studies, sometimes interpreted along Kantian lines: the most influential man at the Stift was G.C. Storr, who filled the space that Kant had made for a 'rational faith' by placing scriptural revelation beyond the merely phenomenal, and so safely beyond the emerging 'higher criticism'. Through much of this, Hegel

recommend Greek and Latin grammar as a propaedeutic to logic (Butler and Seiler 1984: 254, 263–4; *SL* 36–7, *EL* §24A2). Individual words: e.g. Greek *historia* (*LH* 60), Latin *aliud aliud* (*SL* 90–1, *EL* §92A) and *tollere* (*SL* 81–2); cf. Mure 1950: 1–27, Surber 2006 regarding Hegel on language and philosophy.

⁵⁰ H.S. Harris 1972: 53.

⁵¹ *Über die Religion der Griechen und Römer* (August 1787) was, in H.S. Harris's view, 'the most important and original piece of work that Hegel produced in his school years' (1972: 31).

⁵² For more, see H.S. Harris 1972: 7–8, 28–9.

⁵³ Curricula, Pfleiderer: H.S. Harris 1972: 72–96, 81.

pursued his own less structured path. Along with the late nights of drinking and playing cards, there were late-night studies and a studious manner that gained him the nickname 'the Old Man' (*der Alte*). He also gained the reputation of being something of an eclectic, as his interests ranged from Greek tragedy, Aristotle, Voltaire, Rousseau, Kant, Herder, and Schiller to botany and astronomy.⁵⁴ With Hölderlin and others, he read (and translated) Plato, and the company were inspired by Jacobi's work on Lessing to take up the Spinozistic and ultimately Neoplatonic motto *hen kai pan*.⁵⁵

In the context of the Tübingen Stift, these were fighting words: a pantheistic catchphrase that conjured up such demons as Rousseau, the revolution in France, and pagan Hellenic culture. For some students, dogmatic theology or Kantian interpretations of Scripture were less compelling than the thought that the 'Hellenic ideal' of a unified, harmonious life—where all are one and all in all—was being revived with the new spirit of equality and fraternity across the Rhine. This keynote of the Tübingen years rings through Hegel's first-semester essay, 'On some advantages which the reading of ancient classical Greek and Roman writers secures for us'. The main advantage (he argues) is that it liberates us from the shackles of the staid present: ancient literature emerged immediately from experience, was uncluttered by stale abstractions, and so can be read with profit by those who have not known true spontaneity; in particular, the Greeks lived and thought freely, while the imitative Romans already represent a decline, presaging medieval Catholicism and institutional Lutheranism. This opposition of 'natural' ancients and 'artificial' moderns—typical of Goethe, Schiller, and other contemporaries—'increasingly dominated' his thinking at Tübingen, particularly when the Greek *polis* was associated with the spirit of liberty erupting anew in republican France.⁵⁶ Such an association may illuminate why in Tübingen Hegel was 'perhaps more deeply devoted to the classics than anything modern'.⁵⁷ He would himself later claim, in an official *curriculum vitae*, that he chose theology in Tübingen and teaching positions

⁵⁴ Eclectic: H.S. Harris 1972: 69. Spring and summer of 1791 spent reading Greek tragedy, botany: H.S. Harris 1972: 63 n.2. Hegel's entry on his twenty-first birthday (1791) may well echo Pallas, *Greek Anthology* 10.58.

⁵⁵ On the Neoplatonic provenance of the term, see Assmann 1998: 80–1, 139–41.

⁵⁶ 'Increasingly dominated': H.S. Harris 1972: 76. He found similar qualities of spontaneity in the Book of Job and Hebrew poetry (H.S. Harris 1972: 84).

⁵⁷ H.S. Harris 1993: 25.

in Bern and Frankfurt because they allowed him to continue to devote himself to 'classical literature and philosophy'.⁵⁸

The mix of ideas preoccupying Hegel at this time, and his inner rift between Hellenophile and seminarian, are even more evident in his 'Tübingen Fragment' (1793). Like the first-semester essay, this piece turns around a postulated dichotomy between the 'objective religion' of dogmatic theology and fixed ceremonies that have drained worship of joy and self-confidence, and the 'subjective religion' that is the true core of religious life. This is not the 'subjectivity' of merely *personal* desires or fears, but rather the confident joy of the heart that knows God—via the Kantian practical postulates of personal immortality and divine justice, which dwell as 'ideas' in every heart, including pagan hearts like Coriolanus' or Socrates'. These bring a living faith beyond the *ersatz* knowledge of the theological understanding (*Verstand*), and all those Enlightenment 'babbling quacks peddling shop-worn panaceas', 'cold cognitions and deft displays of verbal dexterity'. Though their stale formulae inspire little real Christian faith, Hegel does accept the need for a rational theology, by which the truths of the 'heart' can be bodied forth in 'objective' ceremonies and customs. He thus introduces his long-cherished ideal of a 'folk religion', which expresses the universal ideas in the people's heart through aesthetic forms, which in turn elevate sensations, imagination, mind, will—the whole being of the worshipper—to consciousness of God.

Such ideas look forward to the 'mythology of reason' of the Oldest System Programme, as well as to Hegel's mature notion of *Sittlichkeit*—the will of a community objectified in its customs and institutions—which the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (PS) will detect first in the 'aesthetic democracies' and 'artistic religion' of the Greeks. So too, the Tübingen Fragment invokes the Greeks as proof that a quasi-Kantian 'folk religion' is possible. For rational conceptions of the divine were reflected in the Greeks' joyful customs and beautiful festivals: the Greek deities rewarded the good, and Nemesis punished the bad; pain was a contingency to be endured with 'strength of soul' and simple 'trust in divine providence'; suffering was not falsified with *abstract* consolations of theodicy. Equally rational was the absence of a Greek sense of guilt or sin, and the happy gratitude marking their festive sacrifices. Thinking wearily of the dour Lutheran Eucharist, Hegel cries out in rapture: 'How different were the Greeks! They approached

⁵⁸ Nohl 1907: viii–ix.

the altars of their friendly gods clad in the colors of joy, their faces, open invitations to friendship and love, beaming with good cheer'. Between these Greeks and their gods there intervened no meddling mediators: their religious life was wholly their own, and was not imposed as a duty by some 'nagging schoolmarm'. Most important, religion was not limited to Sunday worship but pervaded all life, every activity from war to drinking being sanctified by some deity or festival. The Fragment closes with a strained adaptation of Socrates' myth of *Poros* and *Penia* in Plato's *Symposium*. In place of Plato's *Eros* there arises now the 'Spirit of Nations', son of Fortune and Freedom. Natural Religion herself

reared this child without fear of the rod or ghosts in the dark, without the bittersweet honey bread of mysticism or the fetters of words which would keep him perpetually immature. Instead she had him drink the clear and healthful milk of pure sensations. With the flowers of her fine and free imagination she adorned the impenetrable veil that removes the deity from our gaze, conjuring up behind it a realm inhabited by living images onto which he projected the great ideas his heart brings forth in all the fullness of its noble and beautiful sentiments.

Hegel was probably not fully aware of how such dithyrambic effusions to Natural Religion and the Spirit of the Nations echoed the propaganda of Revolutionary France and its *ersatz* festivals to Reason and the Supreme Deity.⁵⁹ But the Fragment's ambiguous ending must surely be consciously modelled on the melancholy close of Winckelmann's *History of Ancient Art*: the happy time of Greek folk religion is past, we know of it only by 'hearsay', and though its scanty memories are enough to 'awaken a painful longing for the original', in reality its spirit has 'fled from the earth'.⁶⁰

After Tübingen, Hegel's *Wanderjahre* as a house-tutor in Bern and Frankfurt gradually weaned him off his nostalgia for the fair ruins of Greece. His horizons and studies broadened even further. In Bern (1793–6), he saw at close hand the culture and hothouse politics of a small, aristocratic city-state; he read Thucydides, Montesquieu, Spinoza,

⁵⁹ On civil religion, Rousseau, and the French Revolution, see Roberts 2011: 15–24.

⁶⁰ The ending's 'pessimism tinged with nostalgia' is additionally compared by Plant with Hölderlin's near contemporary 'Griechenland' (2013: 49–50). On the Winckelmann passage, cf. Potts 1994: 49–50.

Hume, political economists (James Steuart, Adam Smith, Ricardo), and Gibbon.⁶¹ At one level, he would accept Gibbon's 'philosophic' thesis that the Roman Empire dissolved before Germanic 'barbarism' and early Christian 'superstition'; yet his later, longer world-historical vision coupled the decline of Rome with the more profound progress effected by the spirit of 'Germanic' Christendom. He experimented too with ideas about the metamorphosis of Greek folk religion into the 'positive religion' of the early Church, and yearned still for a return to the holistic civic religion of the Classical *polis*.⁶² With such somewhat unorthodox thoughts in mind, he dreaded becoming a Lutheran minister—a legal obligation, if a position were found—and hoped still to make his fortune as Lessing had, making Kant's ideas accessible to all, as an 'educator of the people'.

In Frankfurt (1797–1800), he returned to a more varied urban existence and to the welcome company of his friend Hölderlin. Anticipation of reunion with his old roommate inspired a long poem 'Eleusis' in August 1796: the Eleusinian mysteries in which they were initiates are not to be defiled by scholarly curiosity or fixed concepts of chattering 'Sophists', for it is the imagination, not abstract thought, that melds finite mortals with divine infinity.⁶³ With Hölderlin Hegel thus felt his way through Romantic-idealistic ideas that would become more systematically 'scientific' in later years. Two works in particular mark a turning point. *The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate* (1798–9) has been called 'in many respects... the birthplace of Hegel's mature philosophy',⁶⁴ while a more Romantic voice appears in the fragmentary 'Oldest System Programme of German Idealism' (c.1797). The manuscript is in Hegel's hand, but the contents have been attributed to Schelling, Hölderlin, Hegel himself, or combinations of the three. In any case, it presents a new variation of his Tübingen philhellenism: a Kantian morality bodied forth in an aesthetic way of life. Namely, in the 'German Idealism' proposed, the Idea of the absolutely free mind will be shown to produce the natural world out of itself (the true *creatio ex nihilo*); from nature arises man and all his works, which in the course of world-history will become progressively more beautiful; in this long

⁶¹ See *EM* §549 for a clear allusion to Gibbon's theme. In Bern and Frankfurt, he also read Böhme, Eckhart, and Tauler—what Rosenkranz calls his 'theosophical phase' (Magee 2001: 3).

⁶² From the Bern years come the *Bern Fragments*, a *Kantian Life of Jesus* (1795), and *The Positivity of the Christian Religion*.

⁶³ Language of 'the mysteries' reappears in *PS*, Preface: punning on *Geist* (spirit, alcohol) Hegel pictures Truth as 'the Bacchanalian revel in which no member is not drunk' (cf. Magee 2001: 130–2).

⁶⁴ Beiser 2005: 12.

upward evolution, poetry holds pride of place as the 'teacher of mankind', for what the poet was for early societies, he will become again in fully enlightened times—the one who speaks the Idea sensuously. The 'highest act of Reason' will therefore be an 'aesthetic' one, and under the tutelage of its philosopher-artists society will enjoy a true 'religion of the senses'. The 'mythology of Reason' created by these poet-thinkers will be 'monotheism of reason and heart, polytheism of the imagination and of art'. Speaking to sage and superficial alike, it will bring about an ideal freedom, equality, and brotherhood. It will be the 'last <and> greatest work of mankind'.⁶⁵

Whoever wrote such a sentence was ambitious—and naïve: the ideal of a philosophical art, with images to mediate between mind and sense, stretches from Plato's myth-making Guardians to Augustine's thoughts on Christian art, from Dante's theological lyrics to Nietzsche's 'music-making Socrates' and Zarathustra; in Hegel's lifetime, Schiller advocated an 'aesthetic education' and many Romantic artists longed for a new mythology to replace or revive Christianity.⁶⁶ Hegel's own ambitions were somewhat eclipsed during his years in Jena (1801–7). He arrived too late to experience the exciting atmosphere of the so-called *Frühromantik*. Fichte had resigned his post as Rector amid great controversy; his student admirers were drifting away; the Schlegels had gone, as had Novalis, Tieck, and Schleiermacher. But Schelling remained, and under his patronage and encouragement, Hegel hurriedly completed his Habilitation (in Latin), *De Orbitis Planetarum* (1801), to be able to secure a position as *Privatdozent*. With Schelling, he edited the *Critical Journal of Philosophy*, and his *Differenzschrift* (1801) defended the 'objective' idealism of Schelling's philosophy of nature against the 'subjective' idealism of Fichte. The work inspired the quip that out of Württemberg had come a 'stout warrior' to defend Schelling.⁶⁷ Despite appearances, however, he was no mere henchman. In 1807 his *Phenomenology of Spirit* seemed to burst forth as a declaration of philosophical independence. Its snide description of Schelling's Absolute as 'the night in which all cows are black'⁶⁸—as mysterious as Novalis' Night or Jacobi's vaguely felt infinite—was a cutting criticism that Schelling never quite forgave. The sense of difference was sharpened by an enthusiastic review that contrasted Hegel

⁶⁵ See H.S. Harris 1972: 510–12 for translation of the fragments.

⁶⁶ On this 'call for a new mythology', see Williamson 2004: 56–71.

⁶⁷ H.S. Harris 1983: xix–xxv. ⁶⁸ PS Preface §16.

as 'the German Aristotle' to Schelling's Plato: here was serious, scientific prose to supersede Schelling's more poetic essays.⁶⁹

Hegel's first published book, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, is often taken as his most insightful and challenging. It is also one of his most difficult, as it attempts to condense individual experience, and even all human history, into a single trajectory from immediate sensation to absolute knowledge. It begins not by postulating some criterion for reality and truth, but by throwing the reader *in medias res*, into the immediacy of the most rudimentary 'form of consciousness'—the sensuous certainty of present objects. This, it argues, rests on the rudimentary universals, *this, here, now*, and *I*. Acts of sensation rest on an implicit 'I experience this here now', and even the sheer act of pointing gains sense only from a complex of universals implicit in but not derivative from sense certainty.⁷⁰ Thus language proves more primordial and 'divine' than sensation, which is reduced to a special case of the next, higher form of mind—perception. The analysis of perception, in turn, and of understanding, self-consciousness, reason, and of the spirit of art and religion, each gives way to an ever higher form of mind—until in the end, mind recognizes itself, in the fullness of 'Absolute knowing'.

The laborious path to this absolute knowledge lies through antiquity and its successors, and *PS* weds history to analysis almost at every stage. It immerses the reader in significant stages of ancient life—Greek statuary and athletics, Homeric religion, the *polis*, Sophocles' *Antigone*, the master-slave relation, the Stoicism and Scepticism that ushered in the world-weariness and 'unhappy consciousness' of late antiquity. These, along with moments of the Middle Ages, seventeenth century, Enlightenment, and French Revolution exemplify the concluding thought of *PS*: history preserves in memory that which seems merely contingent and discrete, but the 'comprehended history' (*begriffene Geschichte*) that constitutes absolute knowledge recognizes the inner unity of past contingencies, and sees in the whole trajectory a 'slow procession and succession of spiritual shapes (*Geistern*), a gallery of pictures, each of which is endowed with the entire wealth of Spirit'.⁷¹ In the past, this succession of spiritual forms was slow and laborious because individuals needed time to 'assimilate all this wealth of its substance'. In philosophical memory, by contrast, time speeds up, and in

⁶⁹ On K.F. Bachmann's 1810 review, see Pinkard 2000: 264–5. The moniker 'the modern Aristotle' remains common: e.g. Findlay 1958: 353 ('the Aristotle of our post-Renaissance world, our synoptic thinker without peer'); cf. Weiss 1969: 29–30 for further references.

⁷⁰ Cf. *EL* §20 on how all words are implicit universals.

⁷¹ *PS* §808 (tr. Baillie).

infinite Mind is altogether sublimated: the whole is grasped in an instant. The *exact* correspondences between chronological epochs and moments of *PS* may be difficult to specify.⁷² Yet because the ideal of an almost one-to-one correspondence between the contents of 'pure' mind and their historical instantiations would hover as a will-o'-the-wisp before Hegel's *SL* and Berlin lectures, one surmises that he was groping towards it in *PS* also: the ideal of a world-history logically organized so that all salient facts are shown to be pervaded by a single intelligible structure. This is not just an intellectual ideal, let alone an exercise in mere scholarship. To immerse one's mind in the evolving phenomena of Mind entails ethical and religious metamorphosis: 'comprehended history' is *Erinnerung*—memory, *anamnesis*, interiorization, meditation; it is the 'Calvary of the Absolute Spirit' (*Schädelstätte des absoluten Geistes*).⁷³

Hegel's own description of *PS* as a Golgotha of the spirit and a 'way of the soul' has been supplemented by many other interpretive labels. It has been called a 'voyage of discovery', a *Bildungsroman* with Spirit as hero, a tragedy, a comedy, a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a palimpsest, a propaedeutic to his system, or the first part of that system itself.⁷⁴ Equally or even more appropriate (yet less frequent) are comparisons with various ancient works. An epic of sorts, *PS* partially resembles the *Odyssey* as a panorama of experience: Homer tells of 'the man' who 'saw the cities of many people and learned their minds' (*Odyssey* 1.3), while Hegel follows 'the Spirit' as it wanders through its own past, encountering again the *Geister* and forms of consciousness that compose it; Odysseus is much-enduring and cunning, while *Geist* endures the terror of history, dialectically adapting to and mastering circumstances; both return home to triumph. In a different vein, *PS* could be partially assimilated to Platonic schemes of education: like Plato's Divided Line, *PS* points the reader out of the 'Cave' of shadowy sensation towards the Idea of the Good, educating the mind to 'rely on ideas only and progress systematically through ideas'.⁷⁵ Similarly, *PS* retraces in its own idiom the Neoplatonic

⁷² *PS* 'tied broadly' to European history, but no consensus on specifics: Speight 2008: 87; cf. Bernasconi 1991: 81, Kain 2005: 192–9, Houlgate 2011: 10, and Royce 2015: 215.

⁷³ *PS* §808.

⁷⁴ Golgatha: *PS* §808; cf. §77 ('Way of the Soul which journeys through . . . the stations [i.e. of the Cross?] appointed for it by its own nature') and §78 ('a way of despair'). *Entdeckungsreise, Bildungsroman*, palimpsest: see Smith 1988: 5–6 and Speight 2008: 28, 32 for references. Tragedy: Shklar 1971, Jurist 2000: 87–94 and Billings 2014: 161–88. *Gesamtkunstwerk*: Kaufmann 1978: 127. The first edition of *PS* bore the title, *System of Science, First Part: Phenomenology of Spirit*, but *SL* 10–11 demotes it from 'first part' to propaedeutic.

⁷⁵ *Republic* 501b (αὐτοῖς εἶδει δι' αὐτῶν τὴν μέθοδον ποιουμένη, Shorey translation slightly adapted). Other partial comparisons to Plato include Kojève 1980: 183 (*PS* resembles a Platonic

curriculum that ascends from the protreptic *Alcibiades I* through to the *Philebus*, *Timaeus*, and *Parmenides*; it offers a modern version of St Bonaventure's *itinerium mentis in Deum*.⁷⁶ Like such schemes, *PS* is a work of *protrepsis*, and Hegel was as aware as any Socratic evangelist that Nürnberg schoolboys, Berlin students, aesthetes, the worldly-wise, and others need to be prodded into thought.

Ancient too is the principle 'like knows like', which *PS* shares with so many Greek and Roman thinkers for whom man, as microcosm, does and should reflect the macrocosm. In Hegel's variation of the epistemological principle, each form of consciousness is innerly related to its object: the two are mutually constructive, for a particular mental outlook is constituted by what it thinks, while what it can think is a congeries of those universals accessible to it; as the mind grows in knowledge of itself and objects, it recognizes the limits of both its present perspective and present objects, and so 'what first appeared as the object sinks for consciousness to the level of its way of knowing it' (*PS* §87), and thinking opens out to a broader perspective; or again, as the mind disciplines itself to observing and thinking the object 'objectively', it grows conscious of how its own categories transcendently determine the object as phenomenon, recognizes the inner unity of itself and the phenomenon, and so graduates to a sense of a new whole including both. Ultimately, 'in the limit' (to use the language of mathematical analysis), when the mind matures to *absolute* self-consciousness it can recognize the *nullity* of the distinction between thinking and being: all 'objects' are recognized as not only related to mind, but essential components and expressions of it—concrete individuals themselves wholly intelligible and therefore organic moments of Absolute Mind.

Even if it raised Hegel to the level of absolute knowledge, *PS* did not land him an academic job. After Jena he reverted to his old ambition to become an educator of the people of sorts, first as a journalist and editor of the local *Bamberger Zeitung* (1807–8), then as rector and philosophy teacher in the Aegidien-Gymnasium in Nürnberg (1808–16). Here, in line with

dialogue 'between the great Systems of history'); Stace 1955: §6 (*PS*'s analysis of sense-certainty reveals the sensual object as 'a congeries of concepts or universals', i.e. objective Platonic Ideas); Hartnack 1998: 3 (sense-certainty recalls the mind-set of prisoners in Plato's Cave, while negative Socratic dialectic resembles Hegel's use of negation in *PS* and *SL*); and Speight 2008: 38 (formulations in *PS* §§105–6 recall Cratylus' silent pointing).

⁷⁶ Neoplatonic curriculum: O'Meara 2003: 61–8, Remes 2008: 12–13. Hegel and Platonic Bonaventure: Westphal 1979: 14.

Niethammer's educational reforms, Hegel stressed Greek, philosophy, and their importance for humanistic *Bildung*. He rewrote the curriculum, taught Greek, calculus, philosophy, and religion, and promoted Homer and ancient literature over German, still convinced of the 'advantages' offered by Greek beauty and wholeness of life. His rectoral address of 1809 ('On Classical Studies') is interesting reading for a classicist.⁷⁷ Accepting the dethronement of the older, narrower, Latin-based education, he argues that the newly constituted gymnasium still offers the best grounding for life.⁷⁸ Studying the ancient world in depth is essential for many reasons, practical, ethical, metaphysical: narrowly utilitarian states falter and lose even their wealth when their citizens fail to cultivate their souls and inner freedom, forgetting that nothing is more stimulating and many-sided than ancient literature, for 'in the compass of no other civilization was there ever united so much that was splendid, admirable, original' (*ETW* 326); language is the key to a less mediated experience of antiquity, and here even the seemingly mechanical study of grammar offers the first lessons in logical thought, for in learning the parts of speech and their lawful combinations, in applying general rules to particular cases or recognizing the general in the particular, the young student in fact gains an acquaintance with the categories of the understanding itself—lessons in abstract thought that cannot be gained except in a foreign language, and particularly one *not* spoken; such immersion in ancient grammar, language, literature, and history transports the student out of the present, but far from being a useless academic exercise, studying the glories of antiquity satisfies the most profound need of selfhood, if it is indeed true that a necessary stage in maturation is a self-estrangement from one's immediate present, and that the further one 'travels' the richer one returns 'home':

This centrifugal force of the soul explains why the soul must always be provided with the means of estranging itself from its natural condition and essence, and why in particular the young mind must be led into a remote and foreign world. Now, the screen best suited to perform this task of estrangement for the sake of education is the world and language of the ancients. This world separates us from ourselves, but at the same time it grants us the cardinal means of returning to ourselves: we reconcile

⁷⁷ T. Knox includes a full translation in *ETW* 321–30.

⁷⁸ *LH* 419 suggests that the neglect of Greek after the Counter-Reformation helped consign the Catholic world (in Hegel's view) to anachronism.

ourselves with it and thereby find ourselves again in it, but the self which we then find is the one which accords with the tone and universal essence of mind. (ETW 328)

The passage is rich with the seeds of future thoughts on the inner affinity of mind, nature, and world-history, but it also clearly affirms Hegel's dedication to a *living* tradition. History forms a single whole, the past is prelude to the future, and so the young should study the ancient world because that is the 'best' means for becoming fully integrated, modern selves. Indeed, a gymnasium education is the prerequisite of future progress: like Antaeus, 'every revival and reinvigoration of science and culture has emerged into the light out of a return to antiquity'.

The subtle idealism of Hegel's address must, one imagines, have largely been lost on his audience: how far from then forethought of the famed Berlin Rector, when as headmaster he had to oversee the boisterous banalities of a boys' secondary school! He was (Rosenkranz writes) like Pegasus 'harnessed to the plough'. And yet Hegel himself recognized that the labours of teaching taught him to articulate his ideas more clearly than he had in *PS*. Life also grew more settled and solidly bourgeois: Hegel and Marie von Tucher married in 1811. Yet through it all, his inner Pegasus ploughed on. In three laborious volumes, the *Science of Logic* (*SL*, 1812–16) argues audaciously for the inner unity of all fundamental concepts and laws of thought, both with each other and with extra-logical actuality. As an ontological and even temporal logic, *SL* claimed to prove and make concrete the unity of thought and being with which the Eleatics had inaugurated philosophy itself. Detailing this unity would become for Hegel *the* project of modernity, which he laboured to complete as a university professor: the deduction from thought of the most concrete structure of nature and human history.

An overview of this project appeared in the three volumes of the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (*EPS*, 1817), which Hegel published as professor of philosophy at Heidelberg (1816–18). Before he had taken up this post, however, the patronage of Niethammer bore sudden fruit in August 1816 when Hegel learned of his appointment as His Royal Majesty's Professor of Philology in Erlangen University, with additional titles as 'Professor of Poetry, of Eloquence, of the Greek and Latin languages'. In June Hegel had tentatively proposed himself for some such university post, even expressing his desire to give lectures in philology as well as philosophy. But the offer came after his acceptance of a chair in philosophy in Heidelberg, and in extricating himself from an awkward

situation, he offered, among other reasons, his preference for a philosophy professorship and an unwillingness 'to burden myself with a renewed study and elaboration of a subject outside the science of my professional expertise'.⁷⁹ How different his career might have been had Hegel gone to Erlangen rather than Heidelberg!

Yet Heidelberg also offered colleagues and friends intimately involved with the ancient world. The jurist Anton Thibaut (1772–1840) would become an ally in Hegel's quarrel with Savigny on historical method and Roman law. Other associates were Johann Voss (translator of Homer) and his son, Heinrich, professor of classical philology. Most important of all was Georg Friedrich Creuzer (1771–1858), professor of philology and ancient history from 1804, and author of *Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Völker, besonders der Griechen* (1812). Hegel would advertise Creuzer as his 'honoured friend', link his theory of symbolism with Neoplatonic allegory, adapt his thesis of an Oriental basis for Greek religion, and even develop his own notion of a 'symbolic' mode of art.⁸⁰ In all, though Heidelberg was not the intellectual and cultural centre that it had been in the early 1800s, it still suited Hegel's ambitions: remade in the image of Jena, it was an ancient yet 'modern' university, rooted in tradition yet hospitable to progressive ideals of *Bildung* and *Wissenschaft*—the formation of autonomous selves through disciplined 'science'—and with its various disciplines united theoretically under the philosophical (rather than the theological) faculty.

When in 1818 the call came to Berlin and to Fichte's old chair of philosophy, Hegel could hardly refuse, persuaded by Karl von Altenstein, the reforming education minister, that Berlin would indeed be the appropriate centre from which to disseminate his ideas to Germany and a wider Europe. Berlin in the 1820s would be an exciting place intellectually: Wilhelm von Humboldt was active in linguistics, Böckh in philology, Ritter in geography, Savigny in law, Schleiermacher in theology, Schopenhauer in philosophy, Felix Mendelssohn in music, while younger luminaries like Droysen and Ranke were on the rise, and after 1827 the famed explorer and polymath Alexander von Humboldt was about town. In Berlin Hegel finally came into his own. The *Philosophy of Right* (PR) appeared (1820), as did *EPS* (1827, 1830) and revisions of the *SL* (1831); at the time of his death a new edition of the *PS* was under way. But his main

⁷⁹ On the incident, see Butler and Seiler 1984: 351–5; cf. Pinkard 2000: 352–3.

⁸⁰ 'Honoured friend': e.g. PR §203; cf. LP 2.406, 434. Symbolism and Neoplatonism: LP 1.81–2. Religion, art: cf. Butler and Seiler 1984: 368–72.

energies went into lecturing. Hegel himself writes of how hard he worked on them,⁸¹ and it would seem that after the foundational *PS* and *SL* and the comprehensive outline of the *EPS*, he essentially laboured to fill in the details—particularly to fill out the concluding paragraphs in *EPS* on Objective and Absolute Spirit. This would only be consistent with his frequent assertion that *the* task of modern philosophy is not to discover the fundamental ideas (which had been the Greeks' task), but to unify and exemplify them in actuality. *Qua* modern thinker, then, Hegel labours in his lectures to interpret all known finite particulars as moments within a single, rational system, and so reveal how each phenomenon is a unique refraction of Spirit. His lectures were clearly a work in progress, and we have only the uncompleted (and controversial) fragments of a complete system: Hegel's sudden death by cholera in 1831 prompted his followers to combine his manuscripts with student notes into the neat, readable form now represented by the published *Lectures on Fine Art*, *Lectures on Philosophy of Religion*, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, and *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*.⁸²

1.4. One System in Four Formulae

From 1776, when he entered the gymnasium, to his death in 1831: a lifetime of continuous study informs the twenty hefty volumes of Hegel's collected writings as published by Suhrkamp. Could one sum it all up in a phrase?⁸³ Despite Hegel's repeated warnings, many remain content with formulaic clichés. 'Absolute idealism', 'thesis-antithesis-synthesis', 'the real is the rational', 'the state is the march of God on earth', or 'Oriental nations knew that *one* is free; the Greeks and Romans that *some* are free; whilst *we* know that all men are free' and so forth—such phrases can be repeated glibly, without appreciation of the considerations behind them.⁸⁴ Kant

⁸¹ See e.g. Butler and Seiler 1984: 603.

⁸² Abbreviated henceforth as *LA*, *LR*, *LP*, and *LH*, respectively. See Abbreviations for further details of the editions whose translations I quote (unless otherwise indicated).

⁸³ Fine overviews of Hegel's thought include Stace 1955, Mure 1965, C. Taylor 1975, Houlgate 2005, Speight 2008. Houlgate 2013 is helpful on *PS*; Inwood 1999 is an invaluable resource generally.

⁸⁴ The thesis-antithesis-synthesis formula was articulated by H.M. Chalybäus, not Hegel himself: G.E. Mueller 1958. The actual is the rational: *PR* preface; cf. *SL* 85–6. Stace as 'march of God': *PR* 258A. One, some, all free: *LH* 104. Hegel's maxim not to rely on summary maxims is itself often repeated: 'any project of epitomizing Hegel is delusive' (Mure 1965: xix).

invokes Virgil's Latin to keep the lazy drones from the honeypot of science,⁸⁵ while Hegel for his part complains how many skim the preface or table of contents without proceeding to the book itself. His early ambition to 'educate the people' therefore gave way to a later vocabulary and style that are much more challenging, even forbidding.⁸⁶ At the same time, thought is 'the most trenchant epitomist' as it distils much into little, and accurately concentrates the diffuse into its essence.⁸⁷ Four formulae do helpfully epitomize Hegel's method and ideas; they feature constantly in all his lecture series, and I will draw on them regularly.

The first of these formulae is that *The true is the whole* (*Das Wahre ist das Ganze*). Each entity exists and can be understood only in relation to the wholes in which it is situated, from immediate neighbours to *the* all-embracing totality of which they are constitutive moments. As for Aristotle, empirical particulars are known first 'to us', and we must know particulars before graduating to universals; conversely, particulars derive their intelligibility ultimately from universals, which are known first 'in themselves'. Aristotle's distinction is thus intimately related to Hegel's own 'circular epistemology' by which particulars and universals, parts and wholes, 'lower' and 'higher', and even past and present exist and are intelligible only through each other. The holistic method and ontology of this first formula can be traced back to his student essays, but its first obvious triumph is *PS*, as it strives to articulate the whole underlying each form of consciousness: Absolute Knowing is that whole which creates and heals the subject-object divide, down to sense-perception. Hegel's synopsis of *PS* is often taken to epitomize his whole philosophical project: 'In my view ... everything depends on grasping the true not merely as Substance

⁸⁵ *Ignavum, fucus, pecus a praeseipibus arcent* (*Georgics* 4.168), quoted in *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*.

⁸⁶ This is true even as his mature style consciously rejects Greek and Latin vocabulary for a more Germanic idiom: 'it belongs to the highest cultural development of the people to say everything in their own language' (1804 lecture, cited in *EL* xv; cf. Butler and Seiler 1984: 212–13, *LP* 3.114), while Greek and Roman words encourage verbal juggling—the shallow thinking of the understanding (*Verstand*). So too in an 1805 letter to J.H. Voss: 'Luther has made the Bible speak German; you, Homer—the greatest present that can be given to a people; for a people is barbarous and does not consider the excellent things it knows as its own property until it gets to know them in its own language;—if you would forget these two examples, I should like to say of my aspirations that I shall try to teach philosophy to speak German. Once that is accomplished, it will be infinitely more difficult to give shallowness the appearance of profound speech' (in Butler and Seiler 1984: 107).

⁸⁷ *LH* 5 (thought exemplified by Livy's concision).

but as Subject as well'.⁸⁸ With this phrase, Hegel aims to cap his generation's ambition to reconcile Spinoza's monism of substance with Fichte's subjective idealism, Newtonian nature with free mind—the split that Kant's critical philosophy had established and decried in equal measure.⁸⁹

Substance evolves into subjectivity: this second formula can be read into the trifold division of the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, the book that Hegel published (1817) and rewrote (1827, 1830) as an overview of his system. Here the Stoic triad of logic–physics–ethics is explicitly carried over into its three parts of Logic–Nature–Spirit, envisioned as a trinity of equals, a circle in which each part implies and is implied by all others, with no absolutely privileged entry point or foundational principle. The *Encyclopedia* presents Hegel's sense of the logical (i.e. non-historical) evolution from the abstract Concept of Logic through its progressively more complex embodiments in the phenomena of external Nature and of Spirit—the realm of human psychology ('subjective spirit'), politics ('objective spirit') and culture (art, religion, philosophy: 'absolute spirit'). The progression from the foundational and substantial to the spiritual gives us a third formula: *Logic–Nature–Spirit*.

Our fourth and final formula is at once the most abstract and widely applicable. This is the first triad defining Hegel's logical Concept and basic to his theory of the syllogism—the triad of *universality, particularity, and individuality* (henceforth abbreviated as *UPI*).⁹⁰ Kant had argued that the stuff of sense experience comes shaped by the transcendental forms of time, space, and the categories of the understanding. Phenomena are the synthesis of two elements: the sensual and *a posteriori*, and the categorical or synthetic *a priori*—in Aristotelian terms, the *matter* of intuition comes shaped by the *a priori forms* of the experiencing subject. Hegel, for his part, stresses the

⁸⁸ PS Preface, §17. The phrase has a distinct importance for Hellenic studies, in that it underlies Snell's application of it to Greek culture: from Homer's substantial 'objectivity' to Platonic dialogue of deliberate selves, Snell's Greeks slowly 'discovered' self-consciously subjective *Geist* (1953). His thesis has been rehabilitated by Jeremiah (2012), whose linguistic focus concludes with avowedly Hegelian interpretations of e.g. Platonic Ideas, *auta kath' auta*—self-articulated wholes. In this regard, Gill's promotion of an 'objective-participant' model of the self (over Cartesian 'subjective-individualist' ones) knows of (1996: 40 n.34) but does not pursue parallels with Hegel's many-sided (logical, political, historical) contrast of abstract, 'atomistic' versus concrete, 'ethical' selves: Hegel's conception of *Sittlichkeit* takes prime inspiration from his Greece, just as Gill's 'objective-participant' self is 'framed with Greek thinking in mind' (1996: 10). Note also (*pace* Gill 1996: 14–15) that 'Romantic' thinkers like Hegel insist upon the dialogic interplay of self and other (nature, history, God).

⁸⁹ On this ambition, see Beiser 2003: 131–52.

⁹⁰ For a synopsis, see Inwood 1999: 136–9.

unity of these two analytic elements of intuition and the synthetic *a priori*. For him, sensual *Anschauung* provides the *particular* filling of experiences, while subjective categories provide their *universal* framework. Particular and universal thus become abstract aspects of the concrete reality—the phenomenal *individual*. As a result, each entity or phenomenon is recognized to exhibit the same fundamental ‘life-cycle’: a *universal* notion or essence evolves or unfolds its inner determinations, thus *particularizing* itself into a plurality of parts, each of which manifests the entity’s whole essence, and which together constitute the entity as an *individual*. As the inner structure of reality, the UPI triad is thereby the key to knowledge also. Any scientifically organized study should begin with a *universal* concept (*Begriff*) which broadly delimits the subject matter. From this it should proceed to relevant *particulars* (*Besondere*), relating them to each other, and to the universal concept that unites them. The result is a holistic understanding of phenomena as concrete *individuals* (*Einzelne*) in whose particularity the concept is uniquely manifested. Most concisely, then, each entity is to be understood as a ‘concrete universal’, at once uniquely particular and yet shot through by universal categories that define it in relation to every other. Hegel deploys this UPI triad constantly, and it may well articulate what is for him the inner pattern, law, ‘code’, or ‘deep structure’⁹¹ that pervades all thinking disciplines, all objects of all thought. Logic, inanimate nature, animate life, the will, family, state, art-works of all genres, religions, philosophies and their histories—all these reflect to the knowing mind the UPI dynamic of the Concept. Thinking subject and thought object share the same inner structure. Hence Hegel’s idealistic proclamation: ‘all things are a judgment’ and ‘everything is a syllogism’.⁹² Or, more precisely, all that exists exists inasmuch as it is ‘the Idea’—the logical Concept made individually actual. Hegel is able to discern his UPI dialectic in an impressive range of disciplines and phenomena, both large-scale and miniature, both modern and ancient. His ingenuity and virtuosity have been seductive to admirers, and should at least give pause to those critics who glibly dismiss his Absolute Idealism as ‘a priori’.

⁹¹ Code, deep structure: Hodgson 2005: 10, 2006: 11; cf. Labuschagne and Sloodweg 2012: xvii–xviii.

⁹² Judgment: *EL* §167 (cf. Stace 1955: §325). *Alles ist ein Schluß*: *EL* §181; cf. *EL* §§24, 198. World-history as a judgment: *PR* §341. Most broadly: ‘The universe involves the logical idea (U), nature (P) and spirit (I): in his system, Hegel presents them in the order U-P-I, but any order would be equally appropriate, since each term mediates the other two’ (Inwood 1999: 139). Rescher 2007 gives a modern defence of dialectics (including Hegel’s version) as broadly applicable to thinking and objective phenomena.

1.5. The Encyclopedic Ideal: Hegel and Wolfian *Altertumswissenschaft*

The last three formulae (substance-to-subject, Logic–Nature–Spirit, UPI) severely epitomize *PS*, *EPS*, and *SL*, and so risk seeming merely idiosyncratic to Hegel. In fact, they place him at the very centre of intellectual debates, both old and revolutionary. The formula ‘from substance to subjectivity’ sees the emergence of the complex and articulated from the simple and inchoate: an ascent from matter to mind, essentially. So too, the *EPS* categories see a non-temporal ‘unfolding’ of the Concept through Logic and Nature, graduating then to a temporal evolution at the level of Spirit and human history. Both formulae belong among early versions of historical evolution, the organizing idea that would itself evolve into perhaps *the* grand narrative of post-Darwinian modernity. Less hindsight is needed to appreciate how Hegel’s *EPS* categories resonate with the centrepiece of the Enlightenment’s modernity: the ideal of encyclopedia. Previous ages had their compendia and *summae*, going back to Pliny the Elder, but the modern spirit of the *Encyclopédie* grew in strength from Bacon to Christian Wolff and Diderot, and the various national academies, learned societies and architectonic systems from Hobbes to Kant inform Hegel’s ambition to give human knowledge its final, philosophical organization. In this regard, he eschews Diderot’s alphabetical and quasi-egalitarian ordering as a mere aggregate of discrete entries, and looks back rather to Wolff, and ultimately the Stoics, who first divide knowledge into its three proper divisions—logic, physics, and ethics. Indeed Hegel’s ‘circular epistemology’ can be seen as re-enacting the etymology of the word: this en-cyclo-pedia provides an integrated circle (*kyklos*) of knowledge, with parts mutually informing each other rather than simply juxtaposed externally.⁹³

This holism of principle and fact is most evident in the ‘concrete universal’ of the UPI formula, and finds precedents in two monumental works of synthesis: Montesquieu’s *Spirit of the Laws* (1748) and Winckelmann’s *History of Ancient Art* (1764). Montesquieu’s Preface speaks of how years of empirical sifting yielded those ‘first principles’ from which ‘particular

⁹³ See especially *EL* §15–18 with Rockmore 1986. On pre-modern ‘encyclopedias’, and the Greek etymology, see Fowler 1997.

cases' could be deduced, organized, and thoroughly interrelated.⁹⁴ Montesquieu's holistic approach would inspire Winckelmann as *he* reflected on the influence of climates, customs, beliefs and political constitutions on specific ancient art-works.⁹⁵ In both cases, the 'spirit' of a people is the universal that underlies and is revealed in particular laws or art-works—and yet this 'spirit' is known fully only after much reading of documents, much scrambling about sites, much Argus-eyed examination of art-works. Clearly much empirical knowledge went into the making of both books, yet their exposition is quasi-deductive. This is especially evident in Winckelmann's *History*, as it moves from the universal notion of art (*Allgemeiner Begriff*) to the three particular stages (necessity, beauty, superfluity) by which all artistic traditions must allegedly develop.

The quasi-Hegelian language of universal *Begriff* and particular instantiations is also strikingly evident in the *Altertumswissenschaft* emerging in Hegel's lifetime. This 'science of antiquity', integrating philology, history, philosophy, religion, material culture, and so forth, would become the regulative ideal for nineteenth-century research, but perhaps its greatest first impetus came from Winckelmann's wayward enthusiasm. From his stubborn longing for Grecian beauty came a holistic history of ancient art, whose methods were promoted first by Heyne, and institutionalized more decisively through Wolf's influence in the University of Berlin. Winckelmann's holism lies behind Wolf's broad definition of philology as the 'knowledge of human nature as exhibited in antiquity', while Wolf's pupil Böckh refined the notion of a *totius antiquitatis cognitio* by specifying five subdisciplines—public life, private life, religion and art, philosophy and literature, and language. Most striking are the parallels between their programmatic statements and Hegel's UPI dialectic: in defining the new 'science of antiquity', Wolf fastens on 'the idea, or concept of philology' (*Die Idee der Philologie oder ihr Begriff*); in Böckh's hands, each science must have its leading *Begriff* encompassing and informing its constituent parts, while the most universal *Begriff* belongs now to 'philosophy', as the chief science which the others develop in 'specific directions'.⁹⁶ Böckh's 1822 programme

⁹⁴ 'I have laid down the first principles, and have found that the particular cases follow naturally from them...' (tr. Nugent).

⁹⁵ For Montesquieu's influence on Winckelmann, see Potts 1994: 33–46, Harloe 2013: 114.

⁹⁶ Wolf: Introduction to *Idee und Grundriss*. Böckh: *Encyclopädie und Methodologie der philologischen Wissenschaften* (1877), abridged in Pritchard's translation of 1968. Hackel (2006: 33–4) documents how Böckh tried to overcome Hegel's criticism of philology as an unscientific 'aggregate' (*EL* §16A) by incorporating philosophical ideals of system (*Systematizität*) best

bore fruit in 1839 when August von Pauly (1796–1845) published the first volume of the *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. After this, the deluge: through the nineteenth century, dissertations, articles, volumes, and compendia streamed forth from the state-funded mines of *Altertumswissenschaft*, as great teams of ‘scholars, many of them nameless, toiled like the Nibelungen under the direction of gigantic figures like Böckh and later Mommsen’.⁹⁷

By 1921, Wilamowitz would claim that ‘the conquest of the ancient world by science was completed’⁹⁸ and his *History of Classical Philology* looks back with pride at the heroic pioneers and champions of the great enterprise. Wilamowitz treats classical philology as if it were a self-enclosed world of thought, where editions and commentaries are produced, unaffected by wars, revolutions, theories, or discoveries external to scholarship itself. Intent on the Berlin of Wolf, Schleiermacher, and Bekker, for example, Wilamowitz does not mention Hegel. Yet as he paints his ‘grey on grey’, reflecting about a ‘form of life grown old’ after a century of precise scholarship, the knowing reader will sense the shadow of Hegel’s ghost hovering near. Wilamowitz opens with a defining universal: ‘The nature of classical scholarship is . . . defined by its subject matter: Graeco-Roman civilisation in its essence and in every facet of its existence’.⁹⁹ That civilization was a ‘unity’ (he goes on), and therefore its corresponding science must be unified. In practice, of course, that science must be divided up into particular specializations, but still every specialist should always maintain an ‘awareness of the whole’: this *History* aims to bolster the scholar’s awareness of his vocation within and contribution to the great tradition. Thus, like Böckh, Wilamowitz in his opening paragraph effectively revisits the ‘circular epistemology’ elaborated more complexly by Hegel: the ‘true is the whole’, which can be apprehended only by a systematic immersion in all its constitutive parts, while the parts in turn cannot be grasped without some ‘awareness of the whole’ informing them; objective material and subjective disciplines (or, expressed ‘in the Greek way . . . philosophy’) should correspond, as scholarship seeks to reflect the ‘unity’ of Greco-Roman civilization in a single organized whole, transforming initial, indeterminate wonder into a final, precise science. Indeed, even Wilamowitz’s naïve assumption that

programmatized by Fichte; cf. Schlott 2011: 79–85. On the nineteenth-century evolution of Wolfian *Altertumswissenschaft*, see Markner and Veltri 1999 and Most 2002.

⁹⁷ Lloyd-Jones 1982: xi.

⁹⁸ Lloyd-Jones 1982: 105.

⁹⁹ Lloyd-Jones 1982: 1.

particular studies, conducted by scholars separated by language, culture, and time, will all somehow coalesce as contributions to the one, comprehensive science—this positivistic assumption is encoded in Hegel's deeper argument that past advances in politics, art, religion, and philosophy must all converge on the one Idea, and that through the disparate efforts of spirited individuals the Spirit itself works to realize itself as *their* ultimate end. Certainly Hegel would not reject the contemplative ideal that Wilamowitz finds realized in classical philology, as it brings 'that dead world to life by the power of science' and attains a 'pure, beatific contemplation of something we have come to understand in all its truth and beauty'. Here indeed is an *Aufhebung* of the 'bustling life of market and port', the 'poet's song, the thought of the philosopher' into the still higher synthesis of systematic 'science'. In all, antiquity and *Altertumswissenschaft* correspond to each other as perfectly as the Hegelian correspondence of object and subject, being and thinking, though Wilamowitz eschews any language of an 'Absolute' grounding both.

This juxtaposition of the German 'science of antiquity' and the Hegelian Idea is rarely made, even though Hegel was in Berlin a colleague of many of the early giants of German philology.¹⁰⁰ Foremost here is Friedrich August Wolf (1759–1824). If as a schoolboy and theology student Hegel was teased as the 'Old Man' for poring over his extracts, Wolf too was known for a studious nature that ran even to asceticism. As a student (it is said), he read his way through all the ancient authors in six months, staying up late, and closing one eye to rest it while the other continued reading. If in 1795 Hegel was assimilating Gibbon and writing 'Eleusis', Wolf was finishing the *Prolegomena in Homerum*, the book that launched his career and is often seen as foundational for *Altertumswissenschaft*. Noting that writing is hardly mentioned in the Homeric poems, Wolf argues that they started as a collection of separate ballads, sung at appropriate occasions and handed down from illiterate poets to rhapsodes until the time of Pisistratus' Panathenaea when, with the aid of writing, they were 'stitched' together into the continuous wholes that are largely what we now have. Wolf's thesis fired the imagination of contemporaries like Goethe, and as the 'Kant of philology' he enjoyed a fame that the younger Hegel might have envied. Both fled the French advance in 1807, and in the same year that Hegel published *PS*, Wolf published *Darstellung der Alterthumswissenschaft*. He went on to a university professorship and thence promoted his new, more

¹⁰⁰ Hegel is not mentioned in Brill's *New Pauly*, for example.

analytic approach to texts. Wolf's dissections of Homer and Plato's *Timaeus* did not impress Hegel, however, and he sharply criticized them as fundamentally wrong-headed.¹⁰¹ Wolf was not the only object of Hegel's barbed remarks. Niebuhr is also singled out as representative of the 'higher criticism', whose subjective assumptions are too often disparate and unanchored in a truly universal framework.¹⁰² Not at all daunted by these 'founding fathers', Hegel also rounds on classical philologists, jurists, and others who merely turn over the 'rust of antiquity', stupefied by their own erudition.¹⁰³ Could such jibes be aimed towards followers of Wolf and Niebuhr, men like August Bekker,¹⁰⁴ August Böckh,¹⁰⁵ and Karl Lachmann?¹⁰⁶

Niebuhr, Wolf, Bekker, Böckh, Lachmann and many others contributed mightily to the revolution of German scholarship from the 1760s to the 1830s. In this revolution, the humanities gained a new prominence over the medieval, professional triad of law, medicine, and theology, and at the centre of humanistic studies and the 'Faculty of Philosophy' were *Altertumswissenschaft* and philosophy proper. Wolf postulated that 'in ancient times there were only two nations that attained a higher spiritual

¹⁰¹ On Homer, Wolf is oblivious to the first principle of aesthetics, that art-works are unified—and by a single intelligence: *LA* 2.1049–50, 1087. His 'unmethodical' *Timaeus* interpretation is ignorant of the 'deep inward reason' of Platonic dialogues: *LP* 2.72. Despite such criticisms, Hegel remained on friendly terms with Wolf personally (Butler and Seiler 1984: 364, 444).

¹⁰² Niebuhr (1776–1831), royal Prussian historian from 1810, Prussian ambassador to the Vatican from 1816, was not present in Hegel's Berlin, but he was 'the first commanding figure in modern historiography' (Gooch 1913: 14) and his *History of Rome* 'virtually created the modern study of Roman history' (Momigliano 1982: 8). It was an important touchstone for Hegel's views of early Rome, though he is critical—and hardly shares the general rapture at Niebuhr's intellect.

¹⁰³ 'Rust': *LA* 1.279. Scorn for mere or misdirected erudition: e.g. *LP* 1.12, 1.352, 2.220, *LH* 226 and especially 279–80.

¹⁰⁴ Bekker (1785–1871) was a student of Wolf; professor of philosophy in Berlin from 1810 until 1871, where he edited Thucydides, Aristophanes, Plato, Aristotle, Attic orators, Livy, Tacitus, and Sextus Empiricus; he succeeded Niebuhr as editor of the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*.

¹⁰⁵ Böckh (1785–1867) also studied with Wolf; he knew Creuzer in Heidelberg before moving to Berlin in 1809 where from 1811 to 1867 he worked as professor of rhetoric and classical literature, publishing editions of Pindar and Sophocles' *Antigone*, seminal books on Pindaric meter, Greek music, Pythagorean-Platonic science, and Athenian finance. He took up Niebuhr's lead by inaugurating the *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*. His collected lectures between 1809 and 1865 appeared in 1877 as *Enzyklopädie und Methodologie der philologischen Wissenschaften*.

¹⁰⁶ Lachmann (1793–1851) moved from Königsberg to Berlin in 1825 as professor of classical and Germanic philology. His work ranged from Scripture and Augustan lyric to medieval German lyric, the *Nibelungenlied*, and translations of Shakespeare; in classical philology, his most influential works are his Wolfian *Betrachtungen über die Ilias* (1847) and edition of Lucretius (1850).

culture (*Geistes-Cultur*), the Greeks and Romans',¹⁰⁷ and Greek studies gained particular prominence through the influence of Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835). With his enthusiasm for comparative linguistics and a science of 'universal symbolism' as part of an even more universal science of 'anthropology', von Humboldt prized Greek in particular as *the* language of poetry and culture. The beauty of Greek literature would ward off a deadening erudition and creeping pragmatism, and so von Humboldt helped to make the gymnasium a university prerequisite, thus institutionalizing for a century or more the Graecomania of aesthetes like Winckelmann. As a young Hellenophile, Nürnberg gymnasium-teacher, and Berlin professor, Hegel also straddled this transition 'from ideals to institutions', from aesthetic 'emulation' of classical models to disinterested, 'scientific' contemplation of them as timelessly given realities.¹⁰⁸ Hegel's lectures offer a variation on von Humboldt's ideal—humane *Bildung* through universal *Wissenschaft*. Indeed, he parallels Wolf by locating the emergence of a higher, self-conscious 'spirit' among the Greeks and Romans. At the same time, with Creuzer and biblical scholars he continues to relate the Greek world to its 'Oriental' predecessors, while with jurists and historians his Romans look forward to a 'Germanic' Europe. More succinctly, Hegel's Greco-Roman Mediterranean is heir to an Oriental past, and progenitor of a Germanic, Christian future.

In many ways then, Greek and Rome form the centre of Hegel's encyclopedia of human history and 'Spirit'. This has not yet been explored in all its overlapping ramifications. Hegel is most often situated in relation to his many *future* disciples, revisers, enemies: the list of figures that claim him as a major influence—to think with or against—is astonishingly long.¹⁰⁹ Hegel is also clearly a thinker of his own *present*: the

¹⁰⁷ Cited in Markner and Veltri 1999: 61.

¹⁰⁸ 'From ideals to institutions': Marchand 1996: 36–74; cf. R.S. Turner on the 'great transition' (1987), Fischer-Lichte 2017: 46–9 on von Humboldt's elevation of *Bildung* through 'purposeless' Greek (and mathematics). Hofstetter 2001: 86–107 discusses 'Romantic' conceptions surrounding the new University of Berlin.

¹⁰⁹ On immediate followers such as Feuerbach, Strauss, Bauer, Ruge; on Schopenhauer, Heine, Wagner, Burckhardt, and indirectly Nietzsche, Ibsen, Soloviev, and Foucault; on Kierkegaard and later existentialists like Sartre; on Bradley, Bosanquet, and other British Idealists; indirectly on early analysts Moore and Russell, and more directly on later analysts such as Sellars and McDowell; on Marx, Engels, and Lenin, and hence on the later Frankfurt School; on process thinkers such as Peirce, James, and Whitehead who claimed to naturalize absolute idealism; on Dewey's pragmatism, Gadamer's hermeneutics, Bakhtin's criticism, and Oakeshott's conservatism; on Levi-Strauss's binary structures and post-structuralists like Lacan and Derrida; on contemporaries like C. Taylor, Žižek, and W.J. Desmond—on all these, Hegel's influence is felt, now a benevolent inspiration, now a hegemonic foe: it may be impossible,

Enlightenment, Kant, German Idealism, Romanticism, the French Revolution. His own times were the revolutionary forge of the modern world, and yet as he reflects upon them, he often sets himself self-consciously *against* the merely topical or fashionable. In thinking modernity, Hegel is self-consciously a thinker of the past—indeed, the deep past. His vast historical horizon throws his mind past the Reformation, over medieval Christendom, to ancient Rome and Greece, and the even more ancient cultures of the Orient. All these have borne a needful part in making up the modern present, and they continue to shape future revolutions: ‘Just as Antaeus renewed his powers by touching Mother Earth, so has every revival and reinvigoration of science and culture emerged into the light out of a return to antiquity’.

These words of Hegel to the Nürnberg Gymnasium in 1809 bear repeating, being so very applicable to his own intellectual labours, from logic to aesthetics, for it is often not so much among the living as among the ancient dead that he finds his most vital interlocutors. The Greek *polis*, for example, first illustrates his innovative conception of ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*); his Socrates first heralds moral conscience; the dialectic of dogmatism and scepticism is profoundly resolved in the Roman world; Roman law first begins to reflect the absolute status of subjectivity; the Roman Empire first presages modern constitutional monarchies; Greek achievements in sculpture and poetry define those genres forever, while the ‘classical’ Ideal becomes definitive of art itself; Greek anthropomorphic religion and the Roman pantheon were the matrix of Christianity, the ‘religion of truth’; Parmenides, Heraclitus, Plato, and Aristotle are vital teachers, whose wealth of thought has still not been fully mined; just as the Mediterranean ‘middle sea’ (*Mittelmeer*) unites Africa, Asia, and Europe, so the universal Greek genius and universal Roman empire received all the insights of ancient man, synthesized, improved, and bequeathed them to the even more comprehensive civilization of medieval and modern, ‘Germanic’ Europe.

Foucault suggests, to ‘truly escape’ the tentacles of Hegelian thinking (see Gutting 2010: 25–6). On Hegel’s influence, see e.g. Houlgate 2013: 191–4, Houlgate and Bauer 2011: 1, Speight 2008: 2–4, Beiser 2005: 1–3, Knowles 2002: 20–1, Avineri 1974: vii; Toews 1982: 203–23 details Hegel’s influence in Berlin in the 1830s; cf. Boyle, Disley, and Adams 2013 on German Idealism’s multifarious legacy.

1.6. *Hegel's Antiquity: Overview*

In explicating such assertions, this study aims to situate Hegel's mature thought in relation to the stretch of history that was arguably *most* important for him—the Greek and Roman eras. Why, and in what specific ways, was antiquity vital for Hegel? From Homer to Justinian, what did he say, and *not* say, about the ancient world? What did he know, and *not* know? What were his sources? What prejudices and self-conscious assumptions shaped his selection from them? What modern writers, scholars, or trends influenced his ideas? How did his own system influence his perspectives on antiquity? How did those perspectives shape or colour his system? How have Hegel's ideas about Greek and Roman civilizations overlapped with those of classicists? Does his antiquity remain of living interest today?

In tackling questions like these, and in exploring the mutual entanglement of knower and known, as Hegel both shapes, and is shaped by, his antiquity, I will focus mainly on his Berlin lectures on art, religion, philosophy, and world history, as well as on *PR* (also based on his lectures). Revised continuously through the 1820s, collated and published posthumously, the lectures are a vast trove of explorations, assertions, insights, suggestions.¹¹⁰ Indeed, they often contain *more* material than his published writings, and may well represent Hegel's ongoing struggle to produce a fully 'concrete' encyclopedia of human knowledge. Certainly, they do for those sections on Absolute Mind in *EM* §553–77 what *PR* does for those on objective mind in *EM* §483–552, or what *LH* does for the appendix of *PR*—namely expand, fill in details, and so 'individualize' the wholeness of reality into ever finer, more integrated fact. In doing so (readers may be relieved to hear), the lectures are often far more accessible than *PS* or *SL*. The language is clearer, the ideas more vividly illustrated with historical examples or discussions. This pervasive historicity frustrates any purely analytical reading and exemplifies Hegel's conviction that philosophy is not only the history of philosophy,

¹¹⁰ Scepticism regarding editorial manipulation (Gethmann-Siebert 1984: 276–80, 1992: 9–39 on *LA*; Menn 2010: 98 n.8 on Michelet's 1840 *LP*) is countered by e.g. Inwood 1983: 6 ('I can see no significant divergence between Hegel and his editors'), McCarney 2000: 7–9, Barasch 1990: 179. The lectures were attended by the likes of Felix Mendelssohn, David Strauss, Heinrich Heine, Droysen, and so what Donelan writes of *LA* can be generalized: 'however compromised it may be, this edition represents what has been considered Hegel's thoughts for almost two centuries and as Stephen Bungay notes, will remain "an important historical document in its own right", no matter how discredited' (2008: 71, citing Bungay 1984: 7). For similar reasons, I have mainly used the older, traditional editions (e.g. Haldane's *LP*, Sibree's *LH*): newer critical editions (Brown 2006, Hodgson 2011) are exceptional resources, but remain less easily available.

but is the considered history of mankind itself, in *all* its multiform complexity.

The result is something different from previous studies of Hegel and antiquity. These have tended to focus, repeatedly, on a few hallowed topics or themes: Hegel and Sophocles' *Antigone*, Hegel and Plato, Hegel and Aristotle, Hegel and the Sceptics, Hegel and Neoplatonism, Hegel and dialectic. Beyond these, his relations to many Greek artists, poets, historians, and philosophers remain relatively unexplored. Even less attention has been paid to Hegel's Rome, even though Roman law, religion, and Gibbon are arguably as important for his system as the 'Hellenic ideal'.¹¹¹ Some of my individual explorations are thus (to my knowledge) relatively new. While this book cannot possibly detail *all* the relations between *all* the multifarious dimensions of antiquity, of Hegel's thought, of his contemporaries and times, and of later developments in classical scholarship and other fields, nevertheless the primary task that it sets itself is still ambitious: to synthesize, as objectively and holistically as possible, the salient features of Hegel's grasp of most of the ancient figures and phenomena known to him.

In pursuit of this, my chapters follow Hegel's own map for a modern *itinerarium mentis in Deum*, moving from themes of 'objective spirit' in the *Philosophy of Right* and *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (Chapter 2) to those of 'absolute spirit' in the *Lectures on Fine Art* (Chapter 3), *Lectures on Religion* (Chapter 4), and *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* (Chapter 5), and culminating with a look at the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* again, understood now as an evolutionary narrative, an attempted synthesis of everything. Each chapter can be read as a separate study, with readings of Hegel's readings which I can alternately criticize and extend, as each seems to me limited or promising. At a higher level, the chapters are composed in dialogue with each other and draw on more global works like *PS*, *SL*, and *EPS*, in the conviction that the holistic dimension of Hegel's thinking remains most valid and inspiring. Hegel's global outlook brings figures, genres, and periods into connections that more parochial specialists cannot or dare not draw, and the results can remain insightful—or at least thought-provoking. Certainly he approaches individual phenomena from multiple historical and intellectual angles, and his reflections on the relation of art,

¹¹¹ Gray 1941 remains the main work in English, an excellent synthesis but too beholden to Hegel's own perspective. Butler 1935, Trevelyan 1941, Hatfield 1964 also tend to accept versions of the Greeks as mediated by the German authors, a shortcoming partially overcome in Billings 2014 and Valdez 2014.

say, to politics, to religion, to philosophy, and to history, remain vital touchstones for many debates. Of course, even when striving to be objective, Hegel can do violence to antiquity—submitting it to his yoke and (like Blake) driving his ‘plow over the bones of the dead’. Or to take yet another favoured metaphor: of the many ‘stars’ from the many ‘constellations’ that enter into the universe of discourse, Hegel would tend to treat his own system as the absolute centre of gravity of the ‘galaxy’ of minds—the *telos* of the world, and ‘truth’ of the past.¹¹² Like many others, I have resisted this in the interests of pluralism, highlighting moments of discontinuity between antiquity and *Hegel’s antiquity*. Hegel’s corpus can be taken as a *ktēma es aei*, treasure-trove and grab-bag, from which individuals may plunder whatever ideas they find intriguing, enriching, intelligent, insightful, or even right. At the same time, one must respect the fact that his work *aims* to be a system—holistic, consistent, encyclopedic, and even complete. While few now would accept that system as final, Hegel’s systematic formulae (e.g. ‘substance evolves into subjectivity’) remain resonant—for and beyond classical scholarship—and so they thread through all chapters, and are central to the last.

The book is titled *Hegel’s Antiquity*, but to capture its mixture of reconstruction, exposition, interpretation, contextualization, creative elaboration, and sympathetic critique, it might be dignified with a fuller nineteenth-century name. With a bow to Kierkegaard, then, let me modestly propose a more grandiloquent title, as an advertisement and warning to the buyer:

Hegel’s Antiquity: or Hegel’s Theory of Everything, with continual references to the Greeks and Romans, not excluding allusions to Oriental and Germanic peoples, from Achilles to Zenobia and from Adam to Zwingli, being a compendium, defence and critique of the scientific attempt at a system that would consistently and fairly completely describe, explain, and account for the old Mediterranean peoples in their geographical, political, artistic, religious, philosophical, and world-historical contexts.

It is my hope that readers of the following will appreciate how Hegel’s Greece and Rome inform and are informed by his ideas, and therefore lie at the centre of a system that is alternately limited and insightful, idiosyncratic and scholarly, conservative and cutting-edge—a personal synthesis, a reflection of his times, a construct that remains in itself striking, stimulating, and who knows, perhaps even still somewhat seductive.

¹¹² For the concept and term *Konstellationsforschung*, see Henrich 1991; Mulsow and Stamm 2005.

2

Beautiful City, Lawful Empire, Rational State

As Greece is the land of art, so Rome is the world of law.

—Eduard Gans

2.1. Politics of the Will

In the beginning, insofar as Hegel speaks about definite temporal beginnings, there were no utopias. The earliest peoples were dominated by nature—then as now, a stern master. She divides each valley from its neighbour, each moment from its predecessor and successor. Sunk in its own sensuous limitations, the ‘nature-governed mind’ has shifting memories, no long-term plans, and a disposition rarely gentle.¹ Hegel’s state of nature is not as systematically competitive as Hobbes’s, but perhaps closer to the ineffectual anarchy sketched by Thucydides. As for Thucydides, it is the struggle of centuries, not the social contract of a moment, that elevates peoples to civilized life. Physical labour is necessary, of course, but for Hegel in his idealism, civilization consists less in cleared forests, paved roads, and well-stocked cities than in the dispositions that wrought them. To create such effective civilized minds, political labour is needed: laws must be framed, waywardness disciplined, outlooks broadened and deepened by artistic forms and religious rites. Many heroes, law-givers, artists, and sages help to lift their peoples out of the idiocy of natural life and into the complexity of citizenship. Only then, as written history evolves in tandem with the organized state, can one begin to review the past and see that even from the beginning, motivating and guiding every thought and action, there was operative a single *will* to a

¹ ‘Nature-governed minds’: *EM* §§392–3. Hegel’s thesis that a ‘substantive natural spirituality’ is the ‘absolute starting-point’ of every state (*PR* §355R) follows P.F. Stühr’s *Downfall of Natural States* (1812), itself written in dialogue with Niebuhr’s *Roman History*. Writ large into world-history, Hegel’s thesis most associates the ‘natural condition’ with Africa (*LH* 99).

maximally free and ordered civilized community. To be a free citizen of an Athens, Rome, and ultimately the modern state: *this* was the unforeseen good that drew all Scythian nomads across silent steppes.

For Hegel then, the will is the essence of politics and political history. Others may fasten on notions of survival, power, utility, inalienable freedoms and individual rights, the honour of the nation, sacred tradition, or the origin of authority in the kingdom of God. But prior to all these, for Hegel, is the will—the first, and only political reality. This Hegelian will is not arbitrary self-assertion, but deeply rational in its UPI structuring. As *universal* ‘pure indeterminacy’, the will can direct itself anywhere and not bind itself to anything in fact. Isolated in its pure self-relation, this ‘abstract’ will is associated by Hegel with ‘Hindu fanaticism’, Buddhism, scepticism, and French revolutionaries who affirm nothing but their power to destroy.² Yet such ascetics and sceptics are in fact peculiarly wilful, for to will *nothing* is in fact a particular act of will. The universal will thus entails and passes into its ‘opposite’ mode, the *particular* will to this or that determinate end. Here a kaleidoscope of choice leads many to understand freedom as the arbitrary will (*Willkür*): to be free is to do whatever one happens to want. This misconception leads logically on to Calliclean *pleonexia* or the ‘bad infinity’ of Faustian sampling, but for Hegel unbounded satisfaction comes not with willing *all* particular objects (an impossibility), but with the coordination of wills achieved through communal living, as immediate gratification matures into the deeper satisfactions of family, work, and citizenship. For Rousseau, this great transition from the natural to the general will occurs via a social contract; for Schiller, the state’s coordination of specializations makes possible a universal life; for Hegel, it is world history in its *longue durée* that sees the natural will evolve into the ethical one. The ethical will, finally, is that which wills itself in, through, and beyond its particular choices and activities. As it affirms itself through the other (and ideally all others), it attains a truly infinite freedom. As *individual* will, it replays in practical form the inner dialectic of the Idea. Thus, far from being separate from or opposed to reason, the will is in fact ‘a particular way of thinking—thinking translating itself into existence’.³

The result of this ‘translation’ is the whole social world. All its aspects—from property and contracts to customs of sport or religion—are different ways by which the will shapes externality to satisfy and realize itself. The final satisfaction effected by this dialectical self-mediation is that each social

² PR §5A.

³ PR §4A. Dialectic of will: PR §§4–32; cf. Knowles 2002: 23–59.

self can look around and recognize every facet of his society as a reflection and extension of himself.⁴ They have shaped him from birth, while he has shaped them by his activities, creating or nourishing them like extensions of his self. Shaping that by which he is shaped, determined by the objects of his own determining, the Hegelian self will ideally see nothing in the objective social world that is not his own. To see oneself in the other and remain oneself there: with variations, this is Hegel's formula not only for the Idea, speculative thought, will, and freedom, but also for love and 'being at home'.⁵ This unlimited self-mediation is the final object of the will: what one would love and fight for, even unto death.

Therefore, although Hegel repudiates the word, his *Philosophy of Right* is a 'utopian' work, in the specific sense that it envisions the best possible, the most rational—the *ideal* ordering of human activities and relations. *PR* will order these from the abstract (will in itself) to the ever more concrete (property, morality, ethical life). It will move from relations with external objects (property) to relations with other free subjects (morality) to the more holistic relationships of family, civil society, and state, where the use of property grounds reciprocal moral relations (ethical life). Expressed dialectically, the abstract 'person' as bearer of property rights (U), evolves into the moral 'subject' who expresses himself in positive acts of duty (P), and finally into the communal self whose rights and duties are mutually entailing (I). The UPI dialectic thus orders, and should order, the 'real' phenomena of politics into a single, rational whole. This is captured in the celebrated formula, 'the rational is the actual',⁶ and is in fact the central thesis of *PR*—indeed of Hegel's philosophy of history, for in the larger system *PR* serves as the paradigm by which to measure past political communities. Articulating the conceptual 'logic' of politics itself, it becomes the key to all particular political histories, and so the final sections (§§340–60) move from the state-in-itself to its actual manifestations in world history, and from the 'rational' or ideal political ordering of *PR* to the many imperfectly rational, 'actual' states of the past. In turn, political history is the necessary

⁴ I resort to the traditional generic pronominal form only for the sake of stylistic concision; it should be understood in a fully inclusive sense, here and elsewhere.

⁵ Freedom defined as being 'at home (*zu Hause*) with the other': *PR* §4A. The formula parallels those of *Beisichsein* (e.g. *PR* §§23–4) and the infinite (e.g. *EL* §94A).

⁶ *Was vernünftig ist, das ist wirklich; und was wirklich ist, das ist vernünftig*: *PR* §20. As the logical category unifying essence and appearance, *das Wirkliches* ('the actual') is specifically the *Erscheinung* (expression, appearance, or outer self-showing) of essence, and so is predicated of that which is determined by its own inner 'truth' (*SL* 465–505; *EL* §§6, 131). For some controversies in translation, see A. Wood 1990: 10–12; Inwood 1999: 33–5.

propaedeutic to the theory of 'utopia' as realized in *PR*. Hegel's circular epistemology is thus artfully hidden in the relation between *PR* and *LH*: the experiences of world-history (as in *LH*) were a necessary condition for the emergence of political reason, while the theory of objective will (*PR*) is necessary for true historiography (*LH*). Concisely, all history went into the making of *PR*, while *PR* lies at the basis of true histories like *LH*.

The role of Greece and Rome in this political theodicy is manifold. First, one must appreciate Hegel's concern to vindicate the rationality of the state and tradition against the centrifugal forces of the day. The spectre of *anomie* haunted Hegel's Europe: Hobbes's *Leviathan*, Newtonian mechanics, Enlightenment empiricism and scepticism, Kantian autonomy, and revolutionary democracy all contributed to the spirit of subjective difference, the hollowing out of custom, tradition, and a sense of belonging to a larger whole. As a result, too many modern peoples cynically regard the state and even social phenomena as mechanisms of the arbitrary will—of someone else, generally—and hence external and potentially alienating. Hegel's hostility towards such superficial subjectivism is concentrated, in a vitriolic review and testy footnote, on Karl Haller's *Restoration of Political Science*.⁷ This Haller might be called Hegel's Callicles or Thrasyarchus, for in criticizing Haller's alleged praise of the rights of power, Hegel turns for inspiration to a source not much in fashion at the time. Plato's Republic remained a byword for an 'empty ideal' and unrealizable utopia, yet for all its faults, Hegel lauds it for first articulating the primacy and rationality of the state: a classic response to the *anomie* seeping into Greek life, and one whose limits are to be remedied by *PR* itself.⁸

Hegel's 'utopia' is informed by many other ancient precedents. It orders human life into three spheres with three different types of law: a law of *things* (property), of *subjects* (morality), and of ethical communities (family, civil society, state). Phrased in this way, the first moment roughly reworks one fundamental branch of Roman law, the second originally deepens into subjective conscience under Hegel's Rome, while the high ideal of ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) takes its prime inspiration from the Classical Greek *polis*, idealized as an 'aesthetic democracy'. The dialectic of Hegel's world-history should, broadly, see the two historical elements—the aesthetic patriotism of the Greek *polis*, and the moral subjectivity emerging under Rome's iron

⁷ *PR* §258R.

⁸ 'Empty ideal': *PR*, Preface; Bosanquet, similarly, speaks of Plato's 'true conception' of the state (1965 [1899]: 17).

laws—fused into the ideal monarchy of ‘Germanic’ modernity. *Beautiful city, lawful empire, rational state*: the epitome risks caricature of what is a complex, unsystematic appropriation, but may (I hope) prove a helpful and not inaccurate guide. For when one turns in detail to *PR* and *LH*, one finds constant reference to Greek and Roman phenomena, now praised as precedents, now critiqued as inadequate vis-à-vis the ‘right’ social ordering. Greek and Roman understandings of property, slavery, punishment, post-Socratic morality and conscience, the status of the family, irrationality of luxury and markets, the need for popular participation and patriotism under the ‘monarchy’ of an Apollo or Caesar: these and other considerations enter pell-mell into Hegel’s reception of antiquity and construction of the modern state. Many of his references to antiquity we will explore—in the order of their appearance in *PR*, and with some supplements from their more concrete integration in *LH*.

2.2. *Philosophy of Right: Moments of Antiquity*

2.2.1. Abstract Right

One possible cause of alienation is property. The French Revolution spread bitter division across Europe over who did or should own what, or whether in fact all ‘property is theft’. Amid this turmoil, Hegel disagrees with Plato and Rousseau alike to assert as his first political tenet that *individual* private property is rational, necessary, and foundational.⁹ Developing a labour theory of value, Hegel sees the human animal in its most basic need reaching out to external things—grasping, fashioning, marking, possessing, using, contracting, and alienating them for its own purposes. Regarded empirically, as a historical accident (e.g. *occupatio*) or as a means for satisfying natural need, the right to property would be contingent, for needs can be met otherwise and one occupier can be ousted by another more powerful. But if occupation is understood as placing one’s will in a thing, then the right that results becomes truly rational and inalienable.¹⁰ In appropriating and

⁹ Property cause of division: Plato *Republic* 462c3–6, Rousseau *Discourse on Inequality*.

¹⁰ Though responding mainly to Locke and Fichte (*PR* §§41–70 with Lampert 1997), Hegel adapts the Roman *ius occupationis* to the modern labour-theory of property: this *ius* self-evidently gives one property in fact (§50) but needs to be corroborated by further appropriation (§51); and so, he who has fully formed X owns *both* its form and matter (an Aristotelian distinction used by Roman lawyers and Fichte) since the forming will wholly subdues matter to itself (§52). Natural need: §42A.

owning things, individuals transcend their immediacy to make the external a moment within their self-satisfaction: as a form of mediated self-relation, property allows one 'to exist as Idea'.¹¹

This idealism issues forth in concrete proposals that shape Hegel's understanding of ancient property arrangements. First, to own is 'to have power over a thing',¹² and since the will is singular, its objects must be correspondingly singular: an abstract 'I' possesses a bare 'this'. Collective bodies, therefore, can have no property rights: singular things can be called 'mine', but not 'ours'. Each individual person must have *some* property, though the exact amount cannot be determined *a priori*.¹³ At one extreme, an individual cannot in his particular person have power over every thing—all air or water, for instance. On the other hand, the argument that persons, born as equal in basic faculties, should have equal possessions is only abstractly persuasive: it ignores how unequal natural talents and national resources, as well as free choices, inevitably conspire to produce inequality of possession.¹⁴ Hegel blends Aristotle's scepticism regarding arithmetic equality here with his own analysis of the 'sacred' right of private property to conclude that schemes for communal ownership are fundamentally 'wrong'. Ancient examples are singled out for critique: Plato's Republic 'violates the right of personality by forbidding the holding of private property'; Epicurus' followers foolishly maintain that 'friends hold all things in common'; the notion of *ager publicus* in the later Roman Republic had to be, and was, overcome by its senatorial opponents.¹⁵ The inadequate realization of private property among

¹¹ PR §41.

¹² PR §45.

¹³ PR §49.

¹⁴ PR §§49A, 200.

¹⁵ Plato, Epicurus: PR §46R; cf. §185R, LP 2.110. For ancient communistic schemes from Pythagorean brotherhoods to Christian monasteries, see Dawson 1992. *Ager publicus*: 'The agrarian laws of Rome embody a conflict between community and private ownership of land; the latter, as the more rational moment, *had* to retain its supremacy' (§46R, italics added). In the 1790s when revolutionaries like 'Gracchus' Babeuf were demanding equality of property, the ancient 'agrarian question' (*Agrarfrage*) took on bitter relevance—as did interpretations like Niebuhr's (Whitman 1990: 156–65, Ridley 2000). Drawing on an incipient distinction between private ownership and hereditary tenure of public property (see Momigliano 1982), Niebuhr argues that the Republic owned and had the right to distribute the *ager publicus*—a contention that Hegel dismisses as no great historical discovery, turning on a 'useless question of jurisprudence' (LH 302–3). Hegel's spleen may be directed against Niebuhr and followers like Savigny, but it also reflects the sharp difference between his Greeks and Romans: Hegel's Romans explicitly recognize the 'sacred right of property', and hence however 'noble' the Gracchi's intentions (309), they could only come to nought in a Roman context; his Spartans and Athenians have no sense of an abstract 'right' to property and are more naturalistic in 'simply desiring that the citizens should have the means of subsistence' (309). As a defender of individual property who did not *fully* appreciate the implications of socialized labour (e.g. in civil society), Hegel would be labelled a bourgeois thinker among later Marxists (e.g. Stace 1955: 383–4; Ryan 1984: 131; Waldron 1988: 374).

Hegel's Greeks and Romans may explain the remark that it definitively asserted itself 'only yesterday, we might say', as when ancient monasteries in Austria and France were dissolved by state order.¹⁶

Hegel's approval of such anti-Catholic acts draws on his own more Protestant, and individualistic, understanding of the 'sacred' right of property. This sacral language might be situated between two poles—the ancient sense of 'divine' wealth, and a more modern absolutization of man's right to appropriate. Regarding the former, it was a central assumption of many ancient peoples that gods possess natural domains, special allotments of land, and even whole cities. Thus all Egypt belonged to Osiris; in Sumer and Asia Minor, gods owned temple-complexes, worked for them by sacred slaves; in Greece, a significant percentage of arable belonged to a temple and its deity—an arrangement that induced an extensive body of sacred laws; while under Rome, similar organizations ensured that the category of 'divine wealth' was firmly articulated in Roman law.¹⁷ Of all this, Hegel seems only vaguely aware: Athens is the city of Athena, and as the 'house' of the god, the ancient temple gains for him a kind of aesthetic sanctity, but no legal status. Of the violation of holy places by ancient conquerors and barbarian marauders, Hegel knows of the Persians and Phocians at Delphi, Memmius at Corinth, Sulla at Athens, Goths and Vandals in Rome, but he does not fret over their 'crimes' of robbing the gods. His own ideas tend to reflect a more modern culture of plundering the Earth. In his quasi-Newtonian scheme, natural things are particular, contingent, and discrete entities without inner dynamism or self-consciousness. Passive, without self-relation, 'external' to themselves (*PR* §42), they are not ends-in-themselves and call out, as it were, to be made into means by a will that is its own end. In more idealistic terms, there is no thing-in-itself incapable of being thought or possessed; no thing outside of *all* relation to thinking mind or forming will. Therefore, what Kant broached, Hegel makes emphatically his own: as embodiments of Spirit, human beings have an 'absolute right of appropriation...over all "things"'. Perhaps water remains the sole thing valuable in its unchanged natural state, yet even here, the modern global

¹⁶ 'Yesterday': *PR* §62R. Monasteries: §§3, 46A; cf. *PR* Introduction, Seidel 1971.

¹⁷ Greek arable: Price 1999: 64–6. Greek sacred law: Lupu 2009: 33–40. Gaius' principle, 'what is subject to divine right is not anyone's property' (*Gaii Institutiones* 2.2–9) was adapted in Justinian's *Digest* (1.8) and *Institutes* (2.1.7–9), and eventually Christianized (Lokin 2003: 22–6); Kant (1994b: §2), Fichte (2000: 120), and Hegel (*PR* §44) implicitly reject it as a form of *res nullius* (cf. Wood 1991: 409).

economy is bringing about the thorough conquest of Neptune's kingdom.¹⁸ Yet if Hegel tends to rationalize the modern appropriation of the Earth, he looks back to antiquity for its first emergence. The absolute freedom of property he associates with Christianity specifically (PR §62R), perhaps taking inspiration from Genesis 1:26–8 where the Lord makes man in His image and sets him as lord over fish, fowl, flesh, and all creeping things. He does not draw on the parallel in Sophocles' *Antigone* when the chorus meditates on man's universal dominion over animals, birds, and the 'unwearied earth'. Here the chorus goes on to recall the greater dominion of death—which crushes all human ambitions. Thus Sophocles hints at a widespread ancient (and very un-Hegelian) pessimism regarding property: in the shifting shadows of the physical cosmos, before the vagaries of fortune, nothing can really be owned except oneself—and for Sophocles, perhaps not even that, as the Sophoclean self remains prey to gods, fate, happenstance, its own passions and even virtues.

This notion of owning oneself, and the attendant metaphor of the 'wealth of spirit', is central to post-Socratic and Christian thinking, and in one sense Hegel accepts the Socratic position that self-possession is a greater form of 'wealth' than ownership of objects and even of one's body.¹⁹ For while physical grasping is 'the most complete' form of possession, it is at the same time 'only subjective, temporary and seriously restricted'.²⁰ The mind's active self-possession, by contrast, *can* be complete without residue, because as pure form the mind offers no insurmountable impediment to its own self-forming: 'It is my spirit which of all things I can make most completely my own'.²¹ The self-forming self recalls Hegel's self-thinking Divine Mind, but its perfect *Bildung* does *not* put him in mind of Cynics, Desert Fathers, and other ancient ascetics who sought to garner the greatest 'wealth' in the wild. It is true that in Hegel's trio of appropriation, use, and alienation, it is the last which is the culminating mode of property. To fully own a thing is to have the freedom to 'disown' it—not because freedom

¹⁸ 'Absolute right': PR §44A; cf. Kant 1994b: §2. One can 'own' fire (PR §196A) and air (§56). Water: §196A. Justinian's *Digest* lists air, flowing water, the sea, and sea-shores as belonging to all, by natural right (1.8.2). Hegel's even shorter list brings him closer to Justinian than Diogenes (devotee of the unownable sunshine) and suggests the *telos* that he finds implicit in ancient mentalities: the 'European mind', before whose ebullience 'nothing can be an insuperable barrier, and which therefore invades everything in order to become present to itself therein' (EM §393A). Global economy: LH 142–3.

¹⁹ On Socratic 'wealth of soul', see W.D. Desmond 2006, esp. 34–8; central here is Plato's triad of possesibles—soul, body, and externals (e.g. *Apology* 30a7–b4, *Laws* 697b, 726a–9a, *Alcibiades* I.131). Locke too postulates as 'the great foundation of property' that a person is 'master of himself and proprietor of his own person' (*Second Treatise*, V.44).

²⁰ PR §55.

²¹ PR §52R (of the *Bildung meines Geistes*).

comes with detachment and poverty, but because alienation initiates the more reciprocal relations of exchange and contract. Hegel's sovereign self does not alienate all his wealth in exchange for the ascetic's nothing, but simply alienates some contingent particulars for other, determinate gains.

Such an approach to self-possession shapes Hegel's thinking about self-alienation—notably in the phenomena of suicide and slavery. If the will can appropriate and alienate any *thing*, can it also alienate itself? Hegel argues that it cannot: just as the mind that doubts itself thereby affirms itself, so the will that negates itself only asserts its power again; to alienate one's will is itself an act of will, and so the will is inalienable; in more Hegelian terms, infinite negation is tantamount to universal affirmation—a paradox better understood now than in pre-Christian antiquity. The first result of this miscomprehension was that the ancients only imperfectly realized that there is 'no right whatsoever to dispose of my life'. Heracles and Brutus were regarded as heroes, but theirs was a dubious courage, and certainly both committed a 'wrong' against themselves. Socrates and Jesus, by contrast, were *not* 'suicides', for though they accepted death willingly, it was not to escape into a will-less oblivion, but to sacrifice their lives for the higher life of the *polis* or Spirit; that is, they alienated the lesser self for the greater, the particular for the universal will. So too with the patriot who submits himself to 'an ethical Idea', and gives his life that his country may live.²² Other scattered remarks seem not fully consistent with this line of argument: Hegel seems to need aesthetic distance to value Christian martyrdom, while he scorns revolutionary enthusiasm for Greco-Roman exempla as utterly 'shallow'.²³ He does not tackle the subtly different argument in Plato's *Phaedo*, where humans, as 'possessions of the gods', cannot fully own themselves.²⁴ Nor does he pause to refute the Archaic Greek maxim, 'best of all not to have been born, and second best to die as soon as possible': a 'wisdom' that propagates through the Silenus-myth, Solon, Theognis, Greek tragedy, Schopenhauer's half-love of a will-less state, and Nietzsche's heroic nihilism—all moments of a different Greece, and a different modernity.²⁵

²² No right of suicide, Heracles, Brutus, patriots: *PR* §70A. Hegel's argument against suicide *per se* resembles Aristotle's but is less forgiving than the Stoics' (for which, see M. Griffin 1986: 72–4).

²³ Christian martyrs died for the Kingdom of Heaven (*LA* 1.544–8), but though their 'bliss of torment' has provided material for idealized painting, a modern person recoils at a certain 'fanaticism of sanctity', even 'barbarity' (1.197), in their renunciations (1.547)—as if no longer to be imitated literally; Gibbon, analogously, is fascinated by, and recoils from, Cyprian's brutal self-sacrifice (1994, Chapter 16). Than the French revolutionary 'cult of antiquity' (Parker 1937, Nippel 2016: 148–90), 'nothing can be shallower': *LH* 6.

²⁴ *Phaedo* 62b8.

²⁵ Archaic pessimism and 'wisdom of Silenus': e.g. Theognis 1.425–8, Sophocles *Oedipus Coloneus* 1224–5; [Plutarch] *Consolation to Apollonius*; Nietzsche *Birth of Tragedy* §§2–4.

Hegel's perspectives on the ancient world are also, arguably, most determinative for his dialectical critique of slavery. His basic argument, as with suicide, is that given the unity of the human being, one cannot alienate one's entire bodily existence without thereby alienating one's own will: but to will away the will itself is a contradiction, hence an impossibility. Contradictory in its essence, slavery cannot and therefore has not kept its purchase on reality: the irrational cannot continue to be actual forever. Nevertheless, this idealist argument is lost on more empirical minds, who can see in a person only a 'natural entity pure and simple'.²⁶ From this perspective, the body and its energy can be traded like any other thing, and so arise the many historical justifications of slavery: bodily freedom is alienated for profit, security, honour, others' safety, and so forth, while masters assert the rights of war and the victor. The classic rationalization of slavery is in Aristotle's *Politics* I. Here the slave is regarded as a thing: a 'man-foot' (*andrapodon*) analogous to 'four-footed' cattle (*tetrapoda*)—or worse, as a 'living tool' to be given motion and purpose by the master's hand. This naturalism is mitigated when Aristotle distinguishes between slaves 'by nature' and slaves 'by custom', and when he affirms that even natural slaves are 'rational animals'—albeit in a passive mode, able to understand reasons—and hence depend symbiotically on their masters for active direction. Aristotle's application of the Sophistic nature/custom dichotomy to slavery ends with a solid affirmation of Greek 'common sense': slavery is naturally right, and the Greeks may well be justified in enslaving barbarians, as natural masters to natural slaves. It is fair to say that Aristotle's one-sided dialectic conceptualizes the overwhelming consensus of pagan antiquity.²⁷

Hegel does not dwell on *Politics* I, and can write simply that

The consciousness of Freedom first arose among the Greeks, and therefore they were free; but they, and the Romans likewise, knew *only that some are free—not man as such*. Even Plato and Aristotle did not know this. The Greeks, therefore, had slaves; and their whole life and the maintenance of their splendid liberty (*schönen Freiheit*), was implicated with the

²⁶ PR §57R.

²⁷ Exceptions to this consensus may include Alcidas' *Messenian Oration*, with its fragment, 'God made all free; nature has made nobody a slave' (Schol. in Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1373b); and Plato's *Republic*, whose non-imperialistic *kallipolis* rests on the 'just' specialization of citizen labour, while slavery appears first in the timarchic state—undermining Vlastos's *a priori* reasoning (1968; cf. W.D. Desmond 2006: 86–90). Some Cynics and Stoics criticized slavery, mainly for its corrosive effects on masters. Roman customs of manumission did not constitute a *theoretical* critique of slavery. For a complementary discussion, see Inwood 2010: 445–6.

institution of slavery: a fact moreover, which made that liberty on the one hand only an accidental, transient and limited growth; on the other hand, constituted it a rigorous thralldom of our common nature.²⁸

‘Only some were free’: the simple formula is in this context quite nuanced. It stresses not only the existence of ‘thralldom’ in the Greek world, but argues in addition that the Greeks could institutionalize others’ unfreedom only because they were not *themselves* fully free: the existence of slavery underscores how ‘limited’ and ‘accidental’ the Greeks’ own freedom was. An underlying tension here is between Greek slavery and their ‘beautiful freedom’. Their way of life was indeed beautiful, and like other philhellenes Hegel can wax lyrical about how the Greeks took as their ‘principal occupation’ the ‘display of individual powers’, frequenting the *gymnasia*, theatres, and assemblies, milling through the open-air temples, discussing affairs, listening to elaborate speeches, and in all cultivating themselves as ‘subjective works of art’.²⁹ The cult of athletics ensured that the Greeks trained and moulded bodies in *gymnasia*, *palaistrai*, and the Games, and learned to immortalize bodily beauty in sculpture and song. Perfect bodily self-possession might be said to be the goal here, yet if some Greeks attained it, they did so in ignorance or indifference to their dependence on the labour of others. Here Hegel breaks sharply with philhellenes to stress that the ‘beautiful’ Greek way of life was founded on the ugly institution of slavery. ‘Most of the work . . . was performed by slaves’, and though free people also worked, they mainly oversaw slaves, and aspired to total freedom from the ‘slavish’ need to work.³⁰ Hegel’s approach would be elaborated by Marxist historians, and though he does not offer detailed analysis of slavery in different periods, occupations, and zones (as Böckh was starting to do), he does make the observation that Greek slavery may in some cases have been more rewarding than the modern relation of employer–labourer—albeit qualitatively different in its moral degradation.³¹

²⁸ LH 18, italics added; cf. LP 1.49.

²⁹ ‘Principal occupation’, ‘display’: LH 241.

³⁰ For this complex of ideas, see e.g. LH 261 (Spartans’ helots), 267, 273 (slavery, freedom from manual labour a ‘necessary condition of an aesthetic democracy’), 396 (slavery allowed Socrates to ‘loungue about’), 436 (Anytus’ business ‘mostly conducted by slaves’; Athenians look down on those who needed to work). Hegel’s understanding of Greek attitudes to work is still common in Hellenic studies. For counterviews, see A.H.M. Jones 1957: 11–17; W.D. Desmond 2006: 31–40 (praise of work).

³¹ PR §67A. Böckh’s *Staatshandlung der Athener* appeared in 1817, three years before Hegel’s PR. Scholarly estimates for the numbers of slaves in Classical Athens often range from 25 per cent to 50 per cent of the total population, generally fewer than assumed by Marxist theorists in their postulation of a Greek leisure class (on which, see E.M. Wood 1988).

Hegel's treatment of Roman slavery is more difficult to disentangle, yet is probably even more central to his history of freedom's evolution. Whereas Hegel's Greeks cultivate a quasi-Schillerian play-drive (*Spieltrieb*), his Romans inhabit a harsh realm of constraint: the aesthetic Greek floats freely from activity to activity, but the worldly Roman is bound by a system and his station within it, which he nevertheless transforms by inner acceptance and labour. Work is the struggle to subdue hard, stubborn objectivity, to infuse the will into external particulars—but in this, can effect a deeper self-development and freedom. But labour, and even *forced* labour, Hegel strongly associates with the Roman world: he decries the legal servitude of Roman children, knows of the vast slave market of Roman Delos, gestures towards a Roman-like context for *PS*'s dialectic of master and slave, highlights the Roman habit of obedience, and detects a workmanlike utilitarianism underlying Roman religion. In sum, he emphatically identifies the Roman world with 'the severe labours of the Manhood of History'.³²

In particular, the master–slave dialectic purports to comprise general forms of consciousness, and initially seems historically non-specific. Two naturalistic selves encounter each other as things; each shares the desire to subdue the other; one wins the struggle and asserts an absolute mastery over the other's labour, body, life, and will; thus an initial relation of equal freedom gives way to one of 'mastery' and 'slavery'. Through the mediation of the slave's labour, the master gains possession of things—and yet, in this dependence on the slave, the master remains himself less than fully free. The slave, by contrast, gains through his labour on things a new consciousness of his own inalienable self-identity: in chains, he learns that he is free. Thus, master and slave are at once both free and unfree. Moreover, their elevation above natural things is mediated through their mutual interdependence, which neither fully recognizes. This deeper self-awareness is achieved by Stoicism in which 'master' and 'slave' are fused into a single, complex whole: the Stoic self is utterly determined by nature, yet absolutely elevated above it in will. Again, Marcus Aurelius (emperor and master) and Epictetus (subject and slave) internalize the same language of *self*-mastery, and both rise above the naturalistic dichotomy of mastery and slavery to realize themselves as a new kind of *spiritual* 'master'—or in Stoic language, an 'inner god'. Hegel associates Stoicism with post-Classical conditions, and with Roman culture specifically, for as a 'universal form of the World-Spirit', Stoicism 'could

³² LH 106. Children: 287. Delos: 312. Obedience: PR §269A, LH 288, 300, 320 (*Zucht*), EM §435A (here Athenians too learn discipline, from Peisistratus: cf. LH 258).

only appear on the scene in a time of universal fear and bondage, but also a time of universal culture which had raised itself to the level of thought'.³³ More specifically still, the dichotomy between Roman legal personhood and the arbitrary power of the empire ensured that each person suffered the split between a vague but absolute inner freedom and external constraint to an all-powerful system: *sui iuris*, yet severely constrained, each Roman citizen was both master (of himself and his family) and slave (to the state). Thus, Roman conditions fostered the psychological split between 'inner' master and 'outer' slave, and made Stoicism a natural philosophy for subjects of the Empire's 'universal fear and bondage'. After Stoicism comes Scepticism and the 'unhappy consciousness', in which the self becomes 'slave' to a transcendent master (i.e. the medievals' God). In the end, then, the master-slave dialectic of *PS* seems firmly, though somewhat indeterminately, set within a *Roman* context: sometime in the late Republic or early Empire, 'before' Stoicism, Scepticism, and the Unhappy Consciousness of late antiquity.³⁴ If so, then from among Hegel's many sources of inspiration and information about slavery—representations of slavery in the ancient Orient (e.g. Exodus, Herodotus), reports of Haitian slave-revolts, philosophical accounts of the transition from a state of nature to a more ethical community, Fichtean arguments, and his own key insight that self-consciousness evolves socially through mutual recognition (*Anerkennung*)—imperial Rome may well be the most important locus for his reflections on the issue.³⁵

Only some such analysis would make sense of the fact that for Hegel Rome gained much of its world-historical importance because it galvanized the emergence of Christianity, the 'religion of freedom'. Progressing beyond the limited self-understanding of Aristotle's Greeks or Marcus's Romans, Christianity's unique respect for all persons as ethical beings of infinite worth would effect the gradual recognition that they are not things, that slavery is inherently *wrong*.³⁶ Centuries were needed for the spirit of rational

³³ *PS* §199.

³⁴ Life-and-death struggle to Unhappy Consciousness: *PS* §§178–230 (probable allusion to Aurelius and Epictetus in §199); cf. §§477–83 on (Roman) legal status; *EM* §§430–5 with Inwood 2010: 438–48.

³⁵ Possible sources for master-slave dialectic: Avineri 1974: 8 (Bern reflections on Oriental Spirit); Buck-Morss 2000 (newspaper reports about Haiti); *LH* 96–9 (African slave trade).

³⁶ Unique respect: esp. *LH* 334; cf. *EL* §163A, *EM* §482. 'Slavery does not cease until the will has been infinitely self-reflected' (*LH* 273); such formulations reflect Hegel's conviction that Christian interiority is deeper than anything known to Greek philosophy or Roman law (e.g. *LP* 1.49). The idea implicitly informs Stark 2003: 291–365, Hart 2009: 175–82, and Garnsey who (like Hart) makes Gregory of Nyssa 'the hero of my narrative' (1996: 243); cf. Holland 2019: 82 *et passim*.

freedom to filter down into actual laws and customs, for (Hegel often stresses) the Spirit moves slowly and five thousand years of history are but a day in its sight. Certainly, the world-historical antinomy between the rights and wrongs of slavery was only entering its final resolution in Hegel's lifetime, as he himself intuited. On the one hand, the spirit unleashed by the French Revolution was starting to cleanse the globe of what had seemed a 'perennial institution'.³⁷ The abolition by the French Republic of feudal serfdom (1789) and of slavery (1791), the Haitian revolution (1791), the UK Slave Trade Act (1807), Pope Pius VII's opposition to French and Portuguese slave trades (1814), the Congress of Vienna's declaration against slavery (1815), the abolition of slavery from Mexico (1820) to Chile (1823) to Bolivia (1831), the British Empire's Slavery Abolition Act (1833), the Russian Empire's emancipation of its serfs (1861), the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment in the US (1865), the end of slavery in Brazil (1888) and the Brussels Conference Act (1890): this catalogue of milestones lends an air of inevitability to the triumphal march of freedom. Yet in the 1810s, when *PR* was gestating, universal abolition was not an *obviously* guaranteed outcome.³⁸ Apologists for slavery continued to pour forth the age-old appeals to expediency, tradition, natural differences, and even free choice. The later history of abolition was, of course, unknown to Hegel: in justifying the will's inalienable freedom against empirical rationalizations of slavery, he relied upon his knowledge of the present and past—and not so much the immediate past, as the more distant gestation of freedom through Greece, Rome, and medieval Christendom.

A recap of the discussion may highlight the complexity of Hegel's analysis of ancient slavery, with its 'circular' integration of the historical particulars and philosophical universals. Like all phenomena, slavery too has its inner 'antinomy': it has been justified empirically and historically as right, but must now be condemned rationally and morally as wrong. The opposite senses of the person as *thing* and *abstract* free will are reconciled through historical forms of slavery, which persisted in 'the transitional phase between natural human existence and the truly ethical condition': treated as a thing,

³⁷ See Drescher 2009: 3–26 for the phrase.

³⁸ For surveys of slavery, see Drescher 2009; Davis 1975 focuses on the critical era of 1770–1823 (cf. Eltis, Bradley, and Cartledge 2011) while Sagarra 1977: 341–5 treats the German situation; cf. Whitman 1990: 153 on the 1807 October decree in Prussia. Hegel's Berlin contemporaries Alexander von Humboldt and Carl Ritter were influential advocates of abolition. Hegel himself favoured gradual abolition as 'wiser and more equable' and more consonant with history's slow progress (*LH* 99).

the slave matures through labour into the fuller self-consciousness of freedom. So *PR* §57 compresses into a paragraph Hegel's condemnation of slavery *per se* and his acknowledgment of the reasons that partially justified its past varieties: a balancing of the historicist's recognition of shifting cultural norms and the philosophical idealist's fidelity to one, true norm—of the claims of positive right and of natural law.³⁹ For Hegel a phenomenon as widespread and long-lived as slavery cannot be *merely* accidental; it cannot be refuted or abolished by edifying slogans. Rather, the labours of history were themselves necessary to enable abolition as a spiritual possibility: slavery has been necessary for freedom—a paradox true of Africa and medieval European serfdom alike—for discipline, obedience, and the self's free submersion in itself, are part of man's painful self-education from Nature to the freedom of Spirit.⁴⁰ In this long evolution, however, slavery in Africa or the Oriental world did not (in Hegel's view) support or stimulate the 'higher' culture of 'some', to the extent that it did in tandem with Greek *Sittlichkeit* and Roman legal personhood. The juxtaposition of Greek and Roman forms of slavery (i.e. 'in the Greek and Roman worlds, some were free') implies that they saw the decisive steps in the 'transition' from nature and Oriental despotism to the realized liberty of modernity. In this historical arc, the subjective principle inaugurated by Socrates, and deepened by Rome and Christianity, would become most deeply rooted not in the Mediterranean South but the 'Germanic' North. Indeed, for Hegel, the more specifically Lutheran culture of individual self-determination and the holiness of the secular (e.g. of productive work) is sublimated in his own dialectical grasp of the providential complexity of freedom: slavery was historically *right* (hence widespread and superficially rational) but inherently, absolutely *wrong* (hence fated to have a finite, merely historical existence); the long crime of slavery was historically necessary for the full freedom of mankind, and Greek and Roman slavery in particular (perhaps more than any other forms) *were* right—as providential means for the modern realization that slavery *is* wrong.

Hegel places his main discussion of slavery in *PR* in the section on 'possession', but it may equally belong to that on 'Wrong', particularly 'Violence and Crime', where one violates the ostensible property of another.

³⁹ Antinomy: *PR* §57. Positive and natural versus philosophical right: §3. Oquendo 1999 offers thoughts on these themes.

⁴⁰ Africa: *LH* 96–8. The brutal 'discipline' of medieval serfdom: 407 ('It was not so much from slavery as through slavery that humanity was emancipated').

Pre-Christian antiquity could commit the 'wrong' of slavery because it had no deep conception of the will. On crime and punishment, by contrast, Greek myth harbours significant insights for Hegel. In his analysis, crime, revenge, and justice are moments of the one rational will that animates criminal, victim, and judge alike. The criminal who in harming another's property or body implicitly takes the maxim of self-satisfaction as a universal law cannot reasonably object if his victims adopt the same maxim to harm him in turn: thus crime elicits counter-crime as its mirror image. Or rather: crime produces punishment as its necessary counterpart, for punishment is a counter-wrong committed on the first wrong-doer. Such ideas are for Hegel strikingly imaged in the Greek Furies. When a crime is committed, these goddesses of vengeance arise with their torches, whips, and snaky hair, in relentless pursuit of the wrongdoer. Taking his cue from Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, where the Furies sleep by Apollo's altar in Delphi but rise in anger the very moment that Orestes murders his mother in Argos, Hegel writes: 'The Eumenides sleep, but crime awakes them'.⁴¹ The pithy saying encapsulates how crime and its punishment are for Hegel *ideal* occurrences, innerly related. If they were only natural events, externally related, then the violence of punishment could be rationalized only by extraneous considerations: to deter future crimes, to better criminals, and so forth. This deficient, atomistic approach appears in Plato's *Protagoras*, but Hegel himself associates it with Beccaria's *On Crimes and Punishments* (1764) and the 'modern ideas' of an Enlightenment-style understanding (*Verstand*). More profoundly rational is the dynamic of Aeschylus' play, where crime and punishment are united in a single seamless bond. Namely, crime awakens the universal, 'divine' will for vengeance, which will is itself part of the criminal's own 'larger' rational self. Hence Hegel sometimes interprets the Furies as existing *within* the mind of an Orestes or Oedipus: the dialectic of crime and punishment occurs within the orbit of the *one* will—now interpreted as the general will, now the will of a single individual.⁴² He interprets the ending of the *Eumenides*, however, with more obvious allegory. The chthonic Furies yield to Olympian Apollo in the

⁴¹ PR §101A; cf. §218R.

⁴² LA 1.227–8 contrasts Aeschylus' objective Furies and the psychological Furies of Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus* (1.1434). Hegel's striking thought (the criminal *wills* his own punishment, for to be punished is to be honoured as a rational being) is not unrelated to Socrates' paradoxes (virtue is knowledge, vice ignorance, and the proper punishment for crime (i.e. ignorance) is education): in Hegelian terms, punishment educates the criminal to knowledge of his universal self.

constituted court of the Areopagus, presided over by Athena: so uncontrolled fury gives way to orderly procedures of debate, deliberation, and voting; private revenge by aggrieved family members subordinates itself to communal trial by court and dispassionate jury.⁴³ Revenge remains at the core of retributive justice, but when systematized properly the cycle of wrong and counter-wrong is transformed into a higher right: the Furies yield but they are still retained as deities, now with subterranean honours and the new name of 'Gracious Ones' (*Eumenides*). One may appreciate how this interpretation of the myth both informs and is informed by Hegel's encyclopedic categories: *Nature* (passions, blood-kinship, nature gods) is sublimated into *Spirit* (courts, state, anthropomorphic Olympians).

The notion that in crime the particular and universal aspects of the criminal's will clash, and that he therefore contradicts himself, is Kantian in its approach. Even more obviously so is the categorical command that sums up Abstract Right for Hegel: 'be a person and respect others as persons'.⁴⁴ This quasi-Kantian formula in fact contains quasi-Roman content, for the term 'person' harks back to the trifold Roman division—laws of persons, things, and actions. For Hegel, the first two divisions harbour a perverse 'confusion': slaves, for example, are understood alternately as 'humans' (*homines*) and as 'things' (*res*), and are treated under the law of persons despite not enjoying status as full *personae*. To clarify matters Hegel would reconstrue 'person' as a bearer of property rights, and extend the designation to everyone. Everyone, regardless of political status, is a 'person', with the right and duty to own property, to respect the property of other persons: 'personality (*Persönlichkeit*) alone [as opposed to e.g. status] ... can confer a right to things and therefore the right of persons in its essence is a right to things'.⁴⁵ By thus cutting across Roman terminological confusion, Hegel offers what he regards as the true conceptual basis of the 'law of things': first adumbrated in the Roman reverence for 'sacred' property rights, this Abstract Right finds its true realization in the 'utopian' modern state. Yet higher modes of self-mediation arise from property relations, in the form of Morality and Ethical Life. Turning to the section on Morality, one seems to breathe an even purer Kantian atmosphere. Yet at the same time, its key idea of the moral conscience is one that Hegel will trace back to antiquity: to Socrates and to its gestation in the Roman World.

⁴³ LA 1.462–3, 1.471, 2.1218.

⁴⁴ PR §36; cf. EM §486R.

⁴⁵ See PR §40 with Buckland 1921: 56–8 and Wood 1991: 405. On personhood and *Rechtzustand* in PS §§477–83, see Bernasconi 1991; cf. Conklin 2008: 48–51.

2.2.2. Morality

Kant's moral theory was hailed by admirers as a revelation: like some new Moses, he had brought down the law to a modern people; like a new Columbus, he had discovered a vast continent of inner freedom; like a new Copernicus, he had articulated a revolutionary paradigm. For Kant, all past moral theories were vitiated by a heteronomous and hypothetical kind of moral reason. They held that an act is moral to the extent that it is adequate to a norm, end, or 'material' good external to the will: if you will a norm X, act thus; if you will an end Y, choose such-and-such means. To be moral is to discipline oneself to a given norm or good, and an act is moral if it accords with or promotes accepted custom, divine law, *eudaimonia*, pleasure, utility, and so forth. But the very plurality of these possible ends surely highlights their contingency, for if all have been adopted at some point, then none are necessary *per se*. That is, none of them *determines* the will, and it is the will itself that directs itself to choose one: the will determines itself and its goods. As the font of norms, Kant argues, the will must be given its due precedence: rather than disciplining the will to some 'objective' law, that law must be conceptualized so as to be adequate to the will in its self-determination. The formula that Kant finds adequate for this is not a hypothetical but a categorical imperative: 'act on that particular maxim which could serve as a universal law'. Kant gives several versions of this moral imperative, but all articulate the one key truth: the will is moral when it chooses in accordance with the universal 'form' present in all wills, and not in accordance with a heteronomous, 'material' good that can accrue only to the isolated individual. An ideally pure and 'holy' will would choose the universal instantly, untempted by any particular inclination. But as rational animals, human beings have a dual orientation, pulled this way by reverence for reason's inner command, and that way by fluctuating, subjective, animal desire. To such forked, satyr-like creatures, each moment presents a choice between rational duty and natural inclination, the 'ought' and the 'is'. Past choices do not determine present ones; a long moral life does not foster a habit of moral choice, a moral character, or any moral 'second nature' (*pace* Aristotle); the human animal remains ever tempted by inclinations and a 'radical evil' never to be eradicated. Yet in rising above private impulses and performing duties from a good will, a human being can feel the sublime freedom of one whose true home is the noumenal 'kingdom of ends'.

Kant's moral theory is for Hegel 'a firm basis and starting point'⁴⁶ but he would go further to anchor its dualism of duty and inclination more firmly within the dialectic of the will itself: the universal will ought to overreach and subsume the particular, and it is only when this dichotomy is realized self-consciously, as a free choice between good and evil—that is, between a universal, rational good and a particular, subjective good—that the will becomes properly moral. Here, the pure or 'holy' will becomes an abstraction from the truly concrete will, which must contain a moment of particularity overcome: that is, the consciousness of evil is necessary for full moral freedom. In this scheme, the will and conscience have a history, one whose progress becomes most evident in the phenomena of Socratic philosophy and Christianity.

Indeed, Hegel's scattered remarks project a history of morality even further back, to the earliest, mythopoetic times—as revealed often through the lens of Greek myth. Early (or arrested) peoples were (or are) like children, so immersed in their natural consciousness, so heedless of motives, long-term purposes, or universal intentions that they lack moral sense altogether.⁴⁷ Oedipus, for example, is in the myth condemned for parricide and incest simply for the fact that he did them: naturalistic, pre-moral peoples see only the external deed and judge the doer guilty, regardless of circumstances or intention. So too, ancient law-codes look to the objective deed alone, ignoring the right to be held responsible only for what one consciously intends. Or again, ancient customs of asylum prohibit even the rightful punishment of criminals within a recognized sanctuary: blood would be shed in a holy space—a crime no motives can justify.⁴⁸

The naturalistic thinking behind such myths and customs is reflected further, for Hegel, in the ancients' constant focus on virtue (*Tugend*). For Kant, virtues like courage and temperance are rooted in natural inclinations, and though they give material for moral choice cannot be identified with

⁴⁶ PR §135R.

⁴⁷ PR §107A. The idea may inform Hegel's jaundiced view of Africans, who indifferently accept tyranny, cannibalism, slavery, such that theirs is a state of 'absolute and thorough injustice' (LH 93–9; cf. EM §393A); of Chinese, who always lie and have no conception of truth-telling; of 'unethical' Indians who have hospitals for cows, but not human beings (LR 2.282, 2.290–1), and whose Brahmins have no 'conscience in respect to truth' (LH 164); and of ancient Syrians, sensuous and cruel (LH 192–3). In this world-historical scheme, Zoroastrian Persians revered the abstract imperative to 'tell the truth' and 'fight the Lie', but it was Greek democratic *Sittlichkeit* that, for all its limitations, brought the first real moral advance.

⁴⁸ Oedipus: PR §118A, LA 1.187–8, Sandis 2010; cf. Ajax's final 'crime' (Werke 4.224). Codes of Draco and 'barbarian honour' (e.g. of Homeric heroes): PR §96, cf. §102. Asylums: §117A.

morality itself. For Hegel, too, virtue is a somewhat outmoded ideal, more appropriate to premodern peoples who thought in consequentialist terms. So if Heracles is the ancient paradigm of virtue, he is in fact, in his rough self-assertion, 'not exactly a moral hero'.⁴⁹ More broadly, the ancient cult of virtue is linked to the precarious existence of ancient republics, which relied on exceptional individuals to meet whatever contingencies might arise. 'Virtue' was the ability of such exceptional characters to serve their communities' particular needs—an ability that admits degrees of 'more or less', as Aristotle theorized.⁵⁰ Hegel reworks the concept into his broader theory of ethical duty, and in doing so clearly draws on Montesquieu's understanding of 'virtue' as republican patriotism or 'love of one's country'. The ancient analogue is probably *philotimia*, the 'love of honour' that inspired Classical citizens to liturgies, Hellenistic kings and Roman magistrates to public benefactions, all loudly attributed to the doers' exceptional virtues.⁵¹ Further stray remarks differentiate a heroic Greek *aretē* from the Roman *virtus* of subordinating personality 'to the state as the universal end'.⁵² The dynamic of such a 'natural history of spirit' reaches its terminus in the modern state, which, as it systematically specifies rights and duties, seeks to minimize the vagaries of individual inclination and 'virtue', and so, for example, removes the prosecution of justice from heroic patriots and other 'knights-errant', and gives it over to professional police.⁵³

Discussions of virtue, from Plato to Kant, tend to involve the concepts of happiness and the highest good. Hegel continues the tradition with reflections on allied notions of purpose, intention, welfare—culminating in the correlatives of conscience and the Good. Socrates was essentially the first herald of both. In *LP*, Socrates' search to define the final, most universal good remained fruitless, but his successors differentiated themselves by specifying it as the Idea of Good (Plato), divine *eudaimonia* (Aristotle), virtue (Stoics), pleasure (Epicureans), and so forth down to Kant's regulative ideal of the *summum bonum* where virtue is justly rewarded with eternal

⁴⁹ *LA* 1.185–6 with *PR* §§150R, 185; cf. *LP* 1.371 (Prodicus' Choice of Heracles).

⁵⁰ Ethical duty, *Tugend*, Aristotle: *PR* §150. On the naturalistic aspect of the soul's 'virtues', see e.g. *LP* 1.391–2, *EM* §392A.

⁵¹ Greek cities as 'democracies' in Montesquieu's sense: *LH* 272; cf. 255–6. Of *philotimia*, MacMullen writes that 'no word, understood to its depths, goes further to explain the Graeco-Roman achievement' (1974: 215). Classical liturgies included funding triremes, choruses, public grain, festivals, monuments. Proclaiming virtues through inscriptions, monuments, coins: Wallace-Hadrill 1981, Noreña 2001.

⁵² *LA* 1.184–5; cf. *LH* 262–3 on the more state-oriented virtue of 'democratic' Sparta.

⁵³ *PR* §294; cf. §93 and §150R, A. 'Natural history of spirit': §150R.

happiness. Hegel critiques Kant's quasi-Platonic dualism when he argues that the *summum bonum* must be capable of actual realization: what 'ought' to be must be capable of actually being, and the rational end becomes real in the *moral*, and fully real in the *ethical* subject. Thus, Hegel defines the Good more immanently: it is 'the Idea as the unity of the conception of the will with the particular will... This good is freedom realized, the absolute end and aim of the world'.⁵⁴ Namely, the Hegelian Good is that *social* world of 'objectivized spirit' in each aspect of which citizens can find their whole will reflected and satisfied. Far from transcending being, essence, mind, or time, this Good is a most immanent *telos*, gradually actualized through human history.

Conscience is the subjective correlative of the Good. From St Paul on, true conscience tends to be revered in Christian cultures as the inner voice of God: an idea particularly resonant for the Lutheran tradition. But the mysterious sense of a personal God breaking through from *without* is eroded in Hegel's treatment of conscience. As the voice that arises in 'deepest internal solitude'—when the self turns away from everything external into an 'absolute certitude of itself within itself' and would there 'determine solely out of itself what is good'—Hegelian conscience becomes the purely immanent certainty of the Good. As immanent, it is for Hegel an equivocal entity. When it adheres to the universal good itself, it is 'a holy thing'. When it pursues its own more arbitrary ends, it becomes positively evil.⁵⁵ Good and evil are thus conjoined as twin possibilities of the will's self-determination, and the will is free to the degree that it knows its capacity for both universal goodwill towards all rational beings, and the perverse willing of *my* good over all others'. For Hegel, this awareness and fascination with evil is primarily a modern, post-Reformation phenomenon: literature celebrates criminal types as free individuals [Schiller's *Robbers*? Goethe's *Faust*?]; strict old codes lose their persuasive force, hypocrisy is rarely condemned as a sin; probabilists and casuists ferret out reasons to justify *any* statement of 'conscience', and so promulgate moral scepticism, even nihilism; crowning it all, the Fichtean ego, in the guise of Romantic ironist, snaps his fingers at objective duties and proclaims, satanically, 'It is not the subject-matter [i.e. law, objective right] which is excellent, but I am the

⁵⁴ PR §129.

⁵⁵ Good as 'essence' of the will: PR §133. 'Absolute certitude': §136. Determining good 'out of itself': §138. 'Holy thing': §137R. Mistaken notions: §§137R, 142. Evil as choosing 'what is peculiar to particularity': §139.

excellent thing, and am master of law and fact'.⁵⁶ This excess of self-assertion shadows Hegel's modernity, and well before Nietzsche, he knows of this 'final, most abstruse, form of evil, whereby evil is perverted into good and good into evil'.

Yet its roots lie for Hegel in antiquity. Earliest is the story of the Fall: the Tree of Knowledge allows Adam and Eve to know good and evil in a *single* moment of insight, and suddenly they are conscious of their nakedness, their difference from Yahweh and each other. Conscience thus exiles mankind from the naïve unity of Paradise. Somewhat analogously, Hegel's prelapsarian Greeks are insulated by their beautiful way of life from consciousness of real evil: of course they knew aggression, crime, vice, *akrasia*, war, and natural calamity—but not evil in the specific moral sense of self-consciously willing one's own particularity in opposition to an acknowledged duty. Sophocles' Antigone does not assert her *own* inner voice when she opposes Cleon, but Socrates comes closer when, 'at the time of the ruin of the Athenian democracy', he refused to accept any external authority uncritically, and 'fled back into himself to seek there what was right and good'. In the 'inner voice' and inner 'oracle' of his *daimonion*, Hegel hears 'the beginning of a self-knowing and so of a genuine freedom'. Indeed, as Socrates follows the *logos*, ready to discipline his particular actions to objective universals, he revises the Protagorean motto, effectively asserting that '*thinking* man is the measure of all things'—and specifically of the Good. For Hegel, Socrates asserts the subjective right to think and to conscientiously obey the good that one thinkingly determines. This is the 'standpoint of modernity' itself, and Socrates actually anticipates Kant as the 'inventor of morality'. On the other hand, this Socratic standpoint corrupted the youth and undermined the heteronomous 'good' of Greek customs.⁵⁷ Destroyer of Greek *Sittlichkeit* and discoverer of moral autonomy: the ambiguity of conscience seems to infect Hegel's Socrates with something of its duality. Scattered remarks like these tend to mediate between the traditional view of conscience as the inner voice of God, and the emerging *Altertumswissenschaft* that would locate

⁵⁶ PR §140f; cf. LH 424–5, 438 (evil a preoccupation first with the Reformation).

⁵⁷ Socrates, *daimonion*, proto-conscience: PR §§138, 274A, 279R; cf. LP 1.391, 1.422–5. 'Thinking man is the measure': LP 1.411. Socrates following *logos*: e.g. Plato *Apology* 32a–d, Xenophon *Memorabilia* 4.4.3. Standpoint of Christian modernity: PR §136A; cf. LH 272 (Classical Greeks 'had no conscience'). Socrates, 'Erfinder der Moral': LH 269; cf. LP 3.424 (Kant reverts 'to the standpoint of Socrates'). Reale, among others, credits Socrates with the 'discovery and founding of moral philosophy' (1987: xvi); more broadly, *philosophes* often made Socrates the moral champion of the 'First Age of Criticism', the 'First Enlightenment' (Gay, 1966: 82).

words like Greek *suneidesis* and Latin *conscientia* within the ‘natural history of spirit’.⁵⁸

2.2.3. Ethical Life

Just as the principle of abstract right (‘be a person and respect persons’) looks forward to the categorical imperative (be a subject and respect subjects), so the moral intention of willing one’s well-being in the well-being of others looks forward to the intimate reciprocity of self and other that defines the various forms of ‘ethical life’: nuclear family, civil society, and state. In each, particular wills are so bound to others in love, self-interest, and patriotism (respectively) that they identify with an encompassing ethical whole as their higher, larger, or ideal self.⁵⁹ In each of these ethical spheres, rights ‘coincide’ with duties,⁶⁰ for each can claim a right from another only to the extent that he is duty-bound to serve others also. Thus, fully reciprocal actions create and shape ethical community, which generates actual duties in a way that the formal categorical imperative cannot. Each of the ethical forms has its own history; each must evolve to attain its proper function within the social body as a whole. The abstract theory of the family, civil society, and state (e.g. in *PR*) therefore draws upon the concrete histories of these spheres, which in Hegel’s case often leads him to Greek and Roman phenomena (e.g. in *PH*).

2.2.3.1. Families: Greek, Roman, Christian

The family was the foundational social and economic unit of both Greek and Roman cultures; for Hegel, the family is a necessary expression of the will, and therefore remains the basic form of modern ethical life, though shorn now of its extended members and economic function.⁶¹ In Hegel’s view, husband and wife join not so much for biological need, property rights, or

⁵⁸ Early studies by e.g. Jahnel (1862) and Kaehler (1878) are followed by Zucker 1928—itself reviewed in Snell 1930, and a point of departure leading up to e.g. Dihle 1982, Bosman 2003, Frede 2012, and Jeremiah 2012. Jewett 1971: 403–19 surveys nineteenth-century scholarship of the Greek term *suneidesis*. W.H.S. Jones traces an implicitly Hegelian trajectory from early heteronomy to the ‘fuller meaning’ of conscience in the Christian ‘doctrine of the Holy Spirit’ (1959: 41). Moya’s ‘Conscience in History’ cleaves even closer to Hegel’s views (2010: 23–8).

⁵⁹ This broadening of the sense of self from family to work-place to state can be compared with the education of the ‘universal individual’ (*PS* §28), and with Stoic *oikeiōsis*.

⁶⁰ *PR* §155.

⁶¹ Family central to Greek and Roman societies: e.g. Aristotle *Politics* 1.2, Cicero *De Officiis* 1.54. On Greek families, see Lacey 1968; for Roman phenomena, see Buckland 1921: 102ff,

moral duties, for marriage is not a primarily natural phenomenon, nor a merely contractual relation. Rather, it is a matter of love—which involves reason and the Idea. With stereotypes that hark back to the Aristotelian duality of form/matter, to Hippocratic medicine and the Pythagorean table of opposites, Hegel opposes the universality of the 'male' *Verstand* to the particularity of the intuitive, 'female' heart. *Geist* itself is both male and female, and when its gendered parts attract and reunite with each other, complementing and completing each other, what they experience is no mere chance emotion, but 'the mind's feeling of its own unity' through the other.⁶² Hegel's very definition of love sees spouses entering unawares into the dialectical life of Spirit, and so the perennial religious aura of 'holy matrimony' has roots in the Idea itself. Ethical love breaks up the narrow mentality of the atomized property-owner or dutiful moral subject. The spouse lives for loved ones and the family unit as for his or her larger self. And as the Concept ever drives on to new syntheses of opposites, so marriage finds its truth and completion in children, who 'synthesize' both parents in a new form and are the living *Aufhebung* of their love.⁶³ This transformative love between all familial members is the ground for further actions: the sharing of property, the education of children, provision for aged parents, and inheritance rights.

In this ethico-logical argument, the nuclear family is foundational for any rationally ordered community, but Greek and Roman families are presented by Hegel as only partially rational. Needless to say, precise evaluation of ancient family relations is not a priority, and he misses much detail, variation, and complexity. He does not even reflect on philosophical passages most hospitable to his own theory. Aristophanes' myth of circle-people in Plato's *Symposium*, with its synthesis of opposites and restoration of original, divine unity, does not appear in *PR*, even though Hegel had read the dialogue in Tübingen.⁶⁴ Nor does he attend to Aristotle's discussion in *Politics* I, where male and female are abstractions from the organic unity of the bonding pair, and where the articulated *oikos* becomes the first natural community—foundational for the *polis*, even as it remains distinct from it. Missing too is attention to

Dixon 1992, Treggiari 1993. Hegel: 'the family is just as necessary, yea, sacred to the individual as is property' (*LP* 2.112).

⁶² *PR* §158.

⁶³ Dialectic of the genus, issuing forth in male and female: *EN* §§369–71.

⁶⁴ *LP* does quote with interest Pythagorean-Gnostic notions of the cosmic 'hermaphrodite', the primordial whole composed of complementary male and female principles (2.398, cf. 1.221).

Aristotle's perfect friendships, in which virtuous or morally mature individuals share pleasures, activities, goals, property, and indeed all of life together: such friends are 'other selves' in whom they can recognize, realize, and actualize themselves—with whom, in Hegelian terms, they can be truly 'at home'. Aristotle even envisions the ideal marriage as such a friendship.⁶⁵

What Hegel does touch upon, several times, is the Greek mythic tradition that made marriage a divine institution. Demeter was goddess of marriage, hearth, and fertility, and as mother of Persephone and tutor of Triptolemus was so associated with agriculture that the very term *Demeter* could mean 'bread' (cf. Latin *Ceres*). Creuzer's study of such associations confirmed in Hegel's mind that in the figure of their goddess, the early Greeks sensed the intimate association of fertility, agriculture, land-ownership, and marriage in no irrational manner: Demeter inaugurates 'the spiritual element in property, wedlock, law, the beginnings of civilization and an ethical order'.⁶⁶ Such thoughts persist beneath the surface of *PR* when Hegel associates the family with the 'substantial', farming class whose productive reverence for tradition and the land are the mainstay of the state.

On the other hand, a thorough Hegelian would regard the Greeks as not culturally ready to grasp the rational kernel of their myth. The quasi-instrumental, patriarchal attitudes informing Greek marriage customs—the preoccupation with getting heirs, the negotiations for dowries, the showering of the marriage pair with fructifying seeds and nuts (*katachusmata*), the carrying of the bride by wagon to the house of her new 'master' (*kyrios*), the designation of married life as a 'living together' (*sunōikēsis*), and the lack of a specific word for 'family' itself, 'house' (*oikos*) and 'hearth' (*hestia*) being the closest equivalents⁶⁷—the half-naturalistic atmosphere in all this differs markedly from the free exchange of rings and vows in the Christian rite, the lighting of a shared candle, and self-giving of one ensouled being to another, even until death. One might not accept that the mystery of romantic love is a uniquely modern or a high medieval phenomenon, or a historical contingency at all, and might find it reflected in antiquity's

⁶⁵ Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 8.12.

⁶⁶ LA 1.489; cf. 1.463, PR §§93A, 167R, 170, and 203A (recommending Creuzer's *Mythology and Symbolism*), LH 228. Mommsen revisits the idea (*History of Rome*, I.2 n.7).

⁶⁷ No name for the husband–wife relation: Aristotle *Politics* 1254b; cf. Nagle 2006: 1–19.

celebrated lovers,⁶⁸ or in its praise of marital *philia* and *homophrosunē*.⁶⁹ From a Hegelian perspective, however, fragmentary resemblances are less important than dominant practices, and the easy acceptance of concubines, prostitutes, male and even child lovers, double standards, and outright misogyny might only bolster Hegel's explicit conclusion that Greece was not 'the right place for love', properly understood. With their individualistic gods, aloof sculptures, and preference for crisp self-contained form, Hegel's Greeks are incapable of that disorienting feeling when self melts into self and yet in losing itself gains its greater self. For Hegel, the mystery of love would be the core of Christian Spirit, evident in the marriage rite, in art of the Holy Family, and so ultimately in *PR*—where the hearth is accorded its true sanctity.

Questions about the family's relation to nature and state were perhaps first resolutely asked during the Sophistic period, and, simultaneously with those inchoate debates, tragedians were mining the myths of the Houses of Atreus and Labdacus for all their contemporary resonance. This is one context that, in Hegel's mind, makes Sophocles' *Antigone* such a compelling symptom of an incipient awakening. He famously interprets Sophocles' play as a dramatization of the conflict of fundamental rights: Antigone defends the right of the family, Creon the city—a clash that involves the tangled opposition of chthonic to Olympian deities, female feeling to male *Verstand*, familial love to political calculation, the duties of kinship to those of citizenship.⁷⁰ Both Antigone and Creon are partially right and can call on appropriate deities to defend hearth or city as divinely willed. But they remain unaware of the inner kinship of their positions, and in falsely absolutizing their partial claims, both act with an aggressive one-sidedness that can only invite annihilation. The dynamic of the conflict allows for no other dramatic resolution—but this feeling of the *aesthetic* rightness of their joint ruin rests on the deeper, rational intuition of the *dialectical* union of

⁶⁸ Hegel associates love with Romantic, not Classical art: one survey of language of love in Homer, Sappho, Anacreon, Sophocles' *Antigone*, and Euripides' *Hippolytus* (but not *erōs* in Plato's *Phaedrus*) concludes that love appears in Greek poetry (and classical art generally) as sensual pleasure and pathos, but not as real 'spiritual depth of feeling' (*LA* 1.563–4). The association anticipates C.S. Lewis on high medieval, courtly love, but one exception for Hegel may be the parting of Hector and Andromache (Homer *Iliad* 6.484), which he quotes at length and links with Romantic art (*LA* 1.158, 2.1083–4).

⁶⁹ *Homophrosynē*: Homer *Odyssey* 6.180–5. Spouses' souls 'mingling' or 'melting' into each other: Plutarch *Coniugalium Praecepta* (*Moralia* 104e–f, 156c12, echoing language of Plato's *Symposium*).

⁷⁰ Hegel uses the play most influentially in *PS* §§446–63, but returns to it also in *PR* §166A and multiple times in *LA*.

family and state. That union drew closer to actual realization as Christian interiority accorded independent spheres for the 'things of Caesar', as for the rights of conscience and family intimacy. It is really only in Hegel's modern state that the family is afforded its true place within the social whole: as the locus of birth, love, and primary education, the family is an inevitable expression of the will, at once separate from yet indirectly supporting and supported by productive civil society and the regulative state. In the rational state, it may well be that plays like *Antigone* become content-wise 'a thing of the past': the very premise of the conflict between an Antigone and Creon should not arise in 'utopia', where the state is the *realized* good that true conscience intuits; or, less ideally, if the conflict did arise, it might be diffused by allowing Polyneices private burial as a brother, while still condemning him publicly as a traitor.⁷¹

The *Antigone* thus represents for Hegel the Greek failure to comprehend family and state, either in their independence or true interrelation. Though the tragedians did intuit the necessity of Fate as it draws opposites towards reconciliation, the first Greek forays into ethical thinking were dominated rather by a sense of the clash of divine 'powers'. Conflict in tragedy is mirrored by Sophistic debates pitting 'nature' against 'culture': does the monogamous family exist by objective nature or by custom and legislative fiat? Is the city a large, tribal family or something qualitatively different?⁷² In the *longue durée* (for Hegel), such debates deepened proper understanding of the family, but in the short term, the rather facile opposition of *physis* and *nomos* undermined Greek ethical life. The *Antigone* dramatizes this dissolution of the social whole, and indeed its dramatic alienation is juxtaposed by Hegel with the real alienation at the heart of the Roman family, as if the latter were a *direct* continuation of the former.⁷³

⁷¹ 'The law court is the privileged conscience... the universal legalized conscience, which does not require to recognize the particular conscience of the accused' (LP 1.443; cf. 1.438–9, LH 422–3). Directed at the 'miserable freedom of thinking' of Quakers, Anabaptists, and no doubt Catholics, such words may leave little room for a modern Antigone or Socrates: the rational 'utopia' is allegedly so well constituted that no citizen can conscientiously oppose it. (For further discussion, see Moyar 2010: 180–90.) Hegel's optimism in modern political convergence may be belied by the fact that *Antigone* has been perhaps the most staged of ancient plays, both in the nineteenth (Van Steen 2016: 205–6) and twentieth centuries (Mee and Foley 2011): indeed the 'Potsdam *Antigone*' of 1841 (with Mendelssohn providing the music, and Böckh academic advice) met with great acclaim (Fischer-Lichte 2017: 45–68).

⁷² The family exists by *nomos* only, not *physis*: e.g. Aristophanes *Clouds* 1421–31, Plato *Republic* 445b–471c. The family and *polis* are both 'natural', but not continuous: e.g. Aristotle *Politics* I.

⁷³ Perhaps thinking of PS §475, Speight writes: 'The claim of the individual—in Sophocles' play... becomes the essence of the world of Roman law, with its defence of atomistic

Regarding the Roman family, Hegel focuses with dismay on how the *patrias potestas* allowed fathers to barter wives, murder sons, enslave children, and dispose of inheritance with a caprice that trampled on the rights of close kin: all likely consequences of the legal formalism of the Roman mind, which grants full 'personhood' only to property-owning males, and makes 'things' of those not *sui iuris*.⁷⁴ So unethical a situation is socially sanctioned because it mirrors the dynamic of Roman society at large. Part re-enacts whole: Roman fathers tyrannize their household of 'things', while the Roman state binds its atomistic members by legal constraints and sheer coercion. So the harshness that Roman citizens suffer from superiors and the state they revisit on their own domestic inferiors: the public 'slave' becomes a domestic 'master'.⁷⁵ This familial alienation is reflected in Rome's foundation myths. As orphans Romulus and Remus grew up ignorant of familial love, and the band of brigands they gathered was equally devoid of ethical intimacy. Force and mercenary profit held these first Romans together, and when the city was founded, they got women and wives by stealing them. The Rape of the Sabine Women is for Hegel a 'universally received historical fact'⁷⁶ and a foundational fact to boot, for ever after Roman wives would remain essentially the spoil and slaves of their husbands. The portrait is extreme, and misses factors that mitigated the legal status of women, even those *in manu*. Yet a determined Hegelian might defend the portrait by pointing to traditional marriage practices: the Roman male could buy his wife by the custom of *coemptio*, could get her by repeated 'use' (*usus*), could capriciously punish, divorce, or ignore her in 'immoral' testamentary bequests.⁷⁷ Certainly, Hegel's explicit view is that no deep affection binds the 'unfeeling non-spiritual units' of the Roman family, and the hearth for which Antigone sacrificed herself, with its 'beautiful, free relation of love and feeling', gives way to the 'severity, dependence, and subordination' subsisting between Roman fathers and their domestic 'things'.⁷⁸ Such domestic alienation makes Hegel's Romans even less capable of love poetry than the Greeks. Without analysing Catullus or Roman elegy (unmentioned in *LA*)

personhood under a universal order' (2008: 48); cf. Moyar 2010: 151. Billings's historical leap is even more precipitous: from Greek tragedy (i.e. *Antigone*) to 'Christian modernity' (2014: 166).

⁷⁴ *Patria potestas*, child-slavery, formalism: *PR* §§174A, 175R. Personality denied to children and other 'things': §43R; cf. §40R.

⁷⁵ *LH* 287.

⁷⁶ *LH* 284.

⁷⁷ Hegel knew of the varieties of marriage that endured from early Rome, even when their inadequacy became more evident (*PR* §217R; cf. §172A).

⁷⁸ See the extended discussion in *LH* 286–8.

and ignoring the love and 'marriage' of Aeneas and Dido, Hegel suggests that the Republic's unsentimental moralists gave way to the opposite extreme in the self-indulgence of something like Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*: 'after the Republic and the strictness of ethical life had been destroyed, love appears [in Roman poetry] as more or less a sensual enjoyment'.⁷⁹ On the other hand, the opposition between the 'beautiful' family of an Antigone, and the harsh attitude of a Cato is not total: Hegel can refer to the *Penates* as expressing the family's divine nature, and he acknowledges that for the Romans monogamy was the 'understood thing', although the custom was not formalized in law until the *Institutes*.⁸⁰

2.2.3.2. Civil Society

The family's proper nature as *hearth* has been fully realized only in the modern world, Hegel argues, because only here have its ancient economic and political dimensions been taken over by civil society and the state. Regarding the former, *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* is a unique 'achievement of the modern world',⁸¹ an achievement brought about by the withering away of the extended family, the shift of production from family and countryside to factories and towns, the consolidation of central governments, and the endless energy of modern subjects as they circumnavigate the globe, create a world-market, invent new goods and wants, and evolve a new business class to cater to the endless demands of the will. The relative lack of such conditions in antiquity caused much confusion (Hegel argues tacitly) regarding aspects of civil society—exchange, work, class, freedom of occupation, luxury, wealth, and poverty. At the heart of the ancients' confusion was their inability (again) to grasp the will's dialectic—the true dynamic behind Adam Smith's political economy, which broaches the central principle of civil society.⁸² Praising the classical economists for finding reason

⁷⁹ LA 1.564; 1.413 quotes and curtly dismisses Ovid *Metamorphoses* 13.789–807 (Polyphemus praising Galatea).

⁸⁰ LH 298. Hegel does not explicitly analyse the Roman ideal of 'the lifelong union of one man and one woman, entered into voluntarily for the sake of the procreation of children, and maintained on the basis of constant mutual affection (*affectio maritalis*)' (Dudley 1960: 21); on this ideal *femina univira* as she evolved from early to Christian Rome, see Lightman and Zeisel 1977.

⁸¹ PR §182A.

⁸² Stressing that political economics 'sprung from the soil of modern times' (PR §189R), Hegel neglects passages like Xenophon *Cyropaedia* 8.2.5 ('the most important ancient text on division of labour': M. Finley 1973: 135). Some remarks on work in Plato's *kallipolis* hint at Hegel's economic Idea: *there*, 'work is just this moment of activity concentrating itself on the particular, which nevertheless goes back into the universal, and is for it' (LP 2.103). More

(i.e. the Idea) in the seeming irrationality of markets, Hegel interprets Smith's 'invisible hand' in terms of the UPI dialectic: *particular* market agents will their own ends and treat others as mere means, and yet, though this threatens an amoral chaos as 'particular and universal fall apart',⁸³ their self-interest in fact contributes unwittingly to a *universal* good like national wealth.

This way of mediating particular and universal was hardly known in Hegel's antiquity, but will determine all three forms of his own 'utopian' civil society—the system of needs, administration of justice, and corporations. In relation to the 'system of needs', or economy proper, Hegel recognizes that the Greeks, especially, were a people of the sea, and that Rome's central location was strategic for pan-Mediterranean trade: he would surely acknowledge that the ancients organized economic activity to meet various needs. Yet the *rationality* of exchange has been recognized only very recently. Humans have a natural 'propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another', according to Adam Smith, and Hegel goes further to argue that exchange (like property) is grounded not merely in biological need but in man's rational being.⁸⁴ His analysis of exchange runs as follows: when P_1 exchanges X for P_2 's Y , both parties agree that X and Y are equal in value, and so share a common value V , which each holds both before and after the exchange, though in different forms. The two parties trade V in different guises, and thus when one abstracts from their differences, they become mirror images of each other, essentially identical. Namely, P_1 recognizes in P_2 a fellow property-holder driven by the *same* self-interest and expectation of a fair trade. Their wills become moments of the *same* self-interested will, and so contractual exchange becomes 'the means whereby one identical will can persist within the absolute difference between independent property owners'.⁸⁵ Here the analysis of common value (V) looks forward to Marx, while remaining grounded in Smith's analysis of labour as the 'first price' of commodities: P_1 and P_2 trade the same amount of labour, in different forms. Here Aristotle's theory of justice offers a counterpoint, which Hegel addresses only indirectly. For Aristotle too, exchange involves an equal 'quantity' of value being traded in different forms, but there is a

negatively, Aristotle's *Politics* reflects Greek ignorance of 'the abstract right of our modern states, that isolates the individual, allows of his acting as such, and yet, as an invisible spirit, holds all its parts together' (2.209). For more on Adam Smith and Hegel, see Waszek 1988.

⁸³ PR §184A.

⁸⁴ PR §71R. 'Truck and barter': Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, I.2.

⁸⁵ PR §74; cf. Waldron 1988: 368–9, 376–7. Invisible hand: §189R.

marked distinction in tone: Aristotle's broader concern is justice (e.g. 'fair price'), while Hegel's is the rationality of freedom. For him, *free* exchange is mutually beneficial, and allows seeming opposites (P_1 , P_2) to be reconciled as 'identical': so a community of enlightened self-interest generates productive market differentiation—a process akin to the Concept's differentiation into internal opposites. For Aristotle and other ancients, by contrast, self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*) is the most reasonable ideal to pursue, and, from this perspective, exchange represents a fall from 'divine' self-sufficiency. This ideal is both cause and effect of the widespread Greek and Roman deprecation of pedlars, merchants, lenders, and others sullied by 'lowly' trade. Hence Aristotle's critique of money-making is both representative of ancient wisdom and the antipodes of Hegel's rationalization of exchange.⁸⁶

Hegel's retort is that the ideal of a bounded self-sufficiency is not adequate to the will's absolute self-determination. It is indeed true that ancient writers hardly contemplate the human drive for 'infinite' self-satisfaction: Plato's Callicles is a rare, even unique, voice, and his clamour for self-satisfaction breaks all decorum in the Platonic dialogue. For Hegel, such demands cannot be shamed into silence forever: 'the right of the subject's particularity, his right to be satisfied, or in other words the right of subjective freedom, is the pivot and centre of the difference between antiquity and modern times'.⁸⁷ No finite thing or animal, man's spiritual being pushes beyond discrete natural particularity; his circle of wants and means expands inexorably, indefinitely. The ancient consensus may decry this and differentiate the few, true, natural needs from the many, false, unnatural wants. Such ideas can result in sumptuary legislation, or more radically, in the Cynicism of naked 'dog-philosophers'. But *their* assertive minimalism is also a mode of self-satisfaction—and not an immediately 'natural' one. It too is mediated by historical complexity: Diogenes is wholly 'a product of Athenian social life', a negation of its luxury and 'distress and depravity' alike.⁸⁸ Thus one extreme generates its opposite, for it is only the dissolution of the harmonious *polis* into self-interested units that enables Diogenes' strident attempt to revive lost harmonies *within* the self-sufficient sage.

⁸⁶ Self-sufficiency as a dominant Greek ideal: W.D. Desmond 2006: 38–40, 144–6 and 2008: 121–2, 172–8. Roman authors also praise self-sufficiency, e.g. of empire (Tacitus *Annals* 1.1.13) or country villas (see Wallace-Hadrill 1998, Becker and Terrenato 2012).

⁸⁷ PR §124R; cf. §151.

⁸⁸ PR §195A.

In fact, the Cynic will to limit the will's possible objects is necessarily self-defeating. More rooted in the will than any ascetic impulse is the drive towards complexity and 'luxury'. For if property and exchange are rational, then so too must be the proliferation of wealth. To satisfy my wants, I need others, yet to exchange value and so gain from their labour, I must conform my labour to their wants. This desire to be served by serving stimulates the specialization of labour, and so the social matrix conspires to produce ever more specialized wants and means of satisfaction, in tandem with each other. The result is the 'social needs' of fashion or novelty—self-caused wants, as man makes 'a necessity of his own'.⁸⁹ Corresponding to rational social needs is an equally rational system of supplying them. As wants multiply, labour-forms proliferate in answering diversity. To meet demand, they become ever simpler, interdependent, and hence more abstract than natural activities—yet in the aggregate more efficient: as moments in a system of means and ends, they produce 'universal permanent resources' (*Vermögen*).⁹⁰ Smith's pin factory epitomizes the rationality of this accumulation of capital: dozens of specialized, unnatural, interdependent tasks are conducted in tandem to produce an astonishing wealth of pins. Indeed, as disparate tasks are coordinated to produce goods beyond the skill or knowledge of any one worker, the factory illustrates the UPI dialectic of civil society itself.

A similar dynamic underlies Hegel's explanations of the rationality of inequality and of an ideal division of classes. Implicitly rejecting the claim in Plato's *Republic* that natural differences should ground an ideal social stratification, Hegel generalizes Adam Smith's argument that initially small differences in skill and talent are magnified by specialized labour into significant inequalities: it is not that the naturally strong do or should become blacksmiths (Plato), but that blacksmiths become strong due to their work (Smith). The result for Hegel is that natural differences will inevitably be magnified by the system of needs into a noticeable, but rational, 'inequality of skill and resources, and even... of moral and intellectual education'.⁹¹ Different specialists, in turn, converge in a shared way of life and common self-interest to form estates or classes.⁹² Ideally, the proper division of classes would be trifold: farmers, townspeople or burghers, and civil servants. Farmers form the 'substantial' class. Rooted in the family,

⁸⁹ Social, self-caused necessity: *PR* §§194, 197. Fashions, luxuries: §§185, 191, 195; cf. *LA* 2.749 on the rational right of fashionistas!

⁹⁰ *PR* §199.

⁹¹ *PR* §200R; cf. *EM* §539.

⁹² *Stände*: *PR* §201.

traditions, and the 'firm-set earth', this class is the permanent basis of all else, and in the farmers and land-holding nobility of his day, Hegel sees living relics of ancient days: the peasants of Egypt and other 'substantial' Oriental states, heroes like Odysseus who ate what they themselves produced, figures like Demeter, divine founder of agriculture and settled life. Methods might change, and there were signs that agriculture was becoming mechanized 'like a factory', yet it seemed self-evident to Hegel in the early 1800s that the farming class would remain relatively unchanged.⁹³ Moving from country to city, the locus of trade and industry, the burghers or reflective business class emerges to shape natural products to suit the changing wants of markets. Relying on its own intelligence and artifice, this group is more flexible, inquiring, sceptical, and rebellious than the farmers. Business flourishes in subjective freedom, and so its medium is cities—and the sea, the 'natural element for industry', the 'universal element' so opposed in its liquid restlessness to the unchanging land, calling forth in its infinity an answering infinity in human desire.⁹⁴ The seafaring Phoenicians are prototypes here, and it is the sea also that fosters the free intelligence of Hegel's Greeks—though the burgher is most at home in the free cities of medieval Italy, the Rhineland and Hanseatic League, and ultimately among the seagoing peoples of Holland and England.⁹⁵ Most uniquely modern of all are civil servants. Replacing scribes, priests, aristocracies, and other, older forms of counsel and leadership, this 'universal' class works on public matters, looks to the will of the whole, and so undertakes as its particular work the works and wills of all.⁹⁶

The 'utopian' triad of farmers, burghers, and civil servants is thus rooted both in world-history and the Concept's UPI dynamic. Implicitly, therefore, it reworks ancient, less ideal schemes of class organization. The naturalistic castes of India had their successors in Egypt, and analogues in Sparta and Plato's ideal republic.⁹⁷ These two states are not representative of Greek practice, however, for caste is absent from the Homeric poems, while the

⁹³ PR §§203–4. Firm-set earth: §247.

⁹⁴ LH 90–1. 'Natural element': PR §247.

⁹⁵ Phoenicians: LH 190–1; cf. 183–4 (trading Mesopotamian, Assyrian cities). Greeks: LH 232 (Archaic cities), 258 (Athens). Only Roman slave-trade at Delos detailed: LH 312. Dutch: LH 434–5. English: PR §247 (with Waszek 1988: 218, 232), LH 455.

⁹⁶ See PR §183; cf. §256R. The class includes state-paid university professors (e.g. LP 3.166–9).

⁹⁷ India: LH 113, 144–8; cf. 177 (classes in Zoroastrian Persia). Egypt: LA 2.781 (citing Herodotus 2.167; cf. 6.60, Plato *Timaeus* 24b1–3, Aristotle *Politics* 1329a40–b24), LH 202–4 (citing also Diodorus, Strabo). Sparta: 262 (free or helot-status determined by birth). Plato's *Republic*: PR §§185, 262A, LH 147.

major division in Classical cities (Hegel suggests) was between citizens and slaves—an easy dichotomy taken over by Marx.⁹⁸ In Hegel's Rome, the dichotomy between rulers and ruled (kings and subjects, patricians and plebeians, emperors and citizen-subjects) ultimately subjected *all* (even the emperor) equally to the sovereign *system*. The medieval division of 'those who prayed, those who fought, and those who worked', and the *ancien régime's* triad of clergy, nobility, and commons, recalls Plato's triad of guardians, auxiliaries, and workers—a class-system that presages Hegel's own, in the sense that both ground social functions in universal aspects of *psychē* or *Geist*.⁹⁹ On the other hand, *psychē* is for Hegel a more naturalistic entity, the 'subjective spirit' that cannot generate higher freedom. Thus, Plato's republic cannot accommodate modern demands for freedom of occupation—or, more generally, for the free self-interest that animates modern civil society. If the moral will contains evil as a moment, so market freedom makes crime a perennial possibility, and as a result, civil society calls out to be regulated, for its own proper functioning. It therefore generates a higher 'will' in the form of the 'system of justice'. Its elements—law, police, and courts—are developed partially with a view to ancient precedents, and most emphatically so with regard to Germanic receptions of Roman law.

The origins, contours, limits, and significance of law and laws are of course much contested. Natural, positive, divine law; law codified from custom, law made by assemblies, magistrates, or kings—the varieties of law have been legion, and discussions are complicated further by the use of the term 'law' to describe natural regularities. Cutting through this tangle is the confident proclamation of Kant's *Logic*: *all* phenomena are governed by regular patterns or laws, which can be consolidated into a single system, and even under a single, highest, intelligible law. Anticipating this, at one end of the specifically legal controversy, were those who followed Leibniz and Christian Wolff to construe law as an expression of timeless reason: from first principles are deduced legal and moral theorems, to be applied by government to regulate society. To this great task, the one resource that 'Enlightened' princes found ready to hand was the Roman legal tradition: Justinian's Code had long been admired as a model of rational organization,

⁹⁸ Homer: *LH* 229. Greece did have clans of hereditary priests and prophets (Burkert 1985: 96), and sons often followed fathers into 'family businesses' like sculpture or dramaturgy, but such practices hardly established fixed 'castes' in Hegel's sense.

⁹⁹ Cf. Harris 1972: 426.

an articulation of the *ius commune* or *ius gentium*, and if once it dominated barbarian law-codes, it retained much influence on contemporary ones like Frederick's *Allgemeines Landrecht* (1794) and the *Code Napoléon* (1803).¹⁰⁰ Sounding the keynote of admiration for Roman law is Leibniz, who writes that 'Jurisprudence itself is a science having very much to do with reasoning, and among the ancients I find nothing which approaches the style of the geometers as much as that of the Pandects'.¹⁰¹ This Euclidean axiomatic is said to have reached its 'high point' in Thibaut's *System des Pandekten Rechts* (1803) as it aims to essentially derive laws from 'the principle of law' itself.¹⁰² one can appreciate why Hegel, with his 'deductions' from the concept of Will, found Thibaut so congenial.

Unqualified admiration for Roman law had, however, become almost impossible by Hegel's time. Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* (1748) promoted the deflating judgment that Roman law was limited by the conditions and 'spirit' of Roman antiquity. Roman law was further demoted as a paradigm of timeless reasoning by Gibbon's forty-fourth chapter, which analysed Roman legal history into three periods—early republican, early imperial, and the age of Justinian. Gibbon's chapter was translated into German by Gustav Hugo, and its conclusions generalized: effective laws are made by the reasoned arguments of jurists who rework past materials into more systematic form: Papinian and Ulpian in the second century AD, and Justinian's lawyers in the sixth are prime examples of such work.¹⁰³ Hugo's approach was elaborated by Savigny (1779–1861) and later Romanists, who accepted as axiomatic that law evolves organically through customs and legal debates, rather than through the 'rational' *fiat* of a prince. Once more, Savigny's historical school generalized from the Roman case: law first grows organically out of a people's customs (e.g. Twelve Tables, praetorian edicts), is then shaped by the reasoned arguments of jurists (Papinian, Ulpian), and is finally codified when legal creativity has ceased

¹⁰⁰ See Stein 1999: 112–13.

¹⁰¹ Wiener 1951: 580. On Wolff, see Stein 1999: 107–10, 2009: 51–2.

¹⁰² Hoefflich 1999: 594.

¹⁰³ Judging from explicit references in PR, Hugo's *Lehrbuch der Geschichte des römischen Rechts* (1790) was Hegel's main source for Roman law, along with J.G. Heineccius's *Antiquitatum Romanarum iurisprudentiam illustrantium syntagma* (1771 [1719]) and *Elementa iuris civilis* (1728). But in surveying contemporary *Rechtswissenschaft* (2000: 106–29), Mährlein judges Gibbon's chapter to be Hegel's 'most important legal source' (108), as does Villey who tends to minimize Hegel's unmediated knowledge of Gaius and Justinian (1974). On Hegel's law lectures and Eduard Gans (1772–1850)—his closest disciple whose *System of Roman Law* (1827) 'could be considered the first Hegelian exposition of a system of legal doctrine'—see Hoffheimer 1995: 28ff.

(Justinian). At the same time, Savigny continued to compare Roman law with mathematics, as a series of deductions to which many different minds contributed without derogating from its overall unity; echoing Leibniz, he even praises Roman jurists for 'calculating' with their legal ideas. Savigny breaks with Leibniz, however, in making legal first principles contingent on a people's culture evolution,¹⁰⁴ and his own work can therefore involve sifting 'Roman' and 'German' dimensions of the Roman legal inheritance, with a view to sharpening *contemporary* law. Historicist nuance is put in the service of a living system; his *History of Roman Law in the Middle Ages* (1815–31) prepared the way for the more foundational *System of Present-day Roman Law* (1840–9).¹⁰⁵

Savigny's blend of concerns—'geometric' deduction from first principles, a deductive system rooted organically in a people's 'spirit'—are partially shared by Hegel, despite their rivalry. One main difference is that Hegel would have legal systems grounded more in timeless moral and rational insight (i.e. of the Will). Yet he too demands legal reasoning sensitive to historical conditions, and so might well accept Savigny's ideal of a jurist with a 'double sensibility'.¹⁰⁶ A blend of historicism and rationalism drives him also to criticize the Roman inheritance, with a view to its contemporary use. For Hegel, ancient Roman laws express the spirit that produced them: the prosaic Roman mind legalized slavery and the brutal *patria potestas*; many distinctions are shoddy, and the Roman lawyers were often at their best precisely when they contradicted themselves—when they ignored acknowledged principle and contrived ways to avoid wrongs long written into the law; the often haphazard organization of Roman law-codes hardly exemplifies deductive reason, and Hugo's association of Roman reasoning with the trichotomies of Kant is tartly dismissed by Hegel. In both content and presentation, the *Institutes* are for Hegel a 'thing of the past', not to be revived *in toto*.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Historically contingent first principles: see Hoefflich 1999: 594–5. Savigny's 'geometrical' approach might in this be compared with near-contemporary, non-Euclidean geometries, which likewise suggest that first principles are not necessary or 'self-evident'.

¹⁰⁵ On Montesquieu, Hugo, Savigny, see Stein 1999: 115–123, 2009: 15–20, 54–65; Whitman 1990: 81–90, 104–12, 126–7.

¹⁰⁶ Savigny's ideal jurist 'must think both historically, in order to form a clear understanding of the peculiarities of each age and each legal form, and systematically, in order to allocate to every concept and proposition its proper place in a living interactive union with the whole' (*vom Beruf unserer Zeit*, in Whitman 1990: 108). Hegel on legal reasoning from principles: *PR* §212.

¹⁰⁷ Conceptual poverty: *PR* §40; cf. §§62R (property law), 180 (family), Buckland 1921: 57 ('loose logic usual with the Roman lawyers'), Villey 1974: 141 ('Hegels großes Verdienst, diese Wahrheit erkannt zu haben'). Haphazard: §§77R (classification of contracts); 211A, 215R

Yet despite these criticisms, Roman law is not a dead letter. The Roman law of things roughly inspires Hegel's categories of personhood and abstract right. More broadly, Roman legal history provides the analogy for the relation of positive and natural law in any period: 'natural law or philosophical right' is to custom and positive right, as the *Institutes* are to the *Pandects*.¹⁰⁸ Here *in nuce* is his historically more dynamic version of Montesquieu's great principle: 'Law in general is human reason, inasmuch as it governs all the inhabitants of the earth: the political and civil laws of each nation ought to be only the particular cases in which human reason is applied'.¹⁰⁹ For Hegel too, law is practical reason itself, which evolves through the laws of particular nations into the ideal statute book embodying a people's will. A leitmotif of *LH*, then, is how national spirits are manifest in their laws. Among Oriental peoples, laws are the *external* fiats of their lords and gods: Yahweh's Decalogue, for example. Hegel's Greeks (especially the Spartans) live according to the ancestral customs and laws 'written' in their own patriotic souls. By contrast, the legal spirit is vastly more evolved among the Romans, who codified their Twelve Tables quite early and continued to revise their laws down to the *Institutes*. More than any other cultural product, the *Institutes* sum up the prosaic Roman understanding (*Verstand*)—analogous, perhaps, to how Aristophanes' *Gesamtkunstwerken*, and the philosophical systems of Proclus and Hegel himself each (allegedly) sums up all that preceded them. Indeed, one might hazard the Hegelian inference that Roman law—developed and refined over two millennia from the Twelve Tables to Justinian, from medieval Romano-Germanic codes and legal schools down to the *Code Napoléon*—has been the law of Europe itself, the objectification of its ethical insight and will. Certainly, for Hegel, if what is actual is rational, then something as enduring as the Roman law tradition must to some extent embody what is timelessly,

(Justinian's Code a 'formless collection of laws'). Moral intuition inspiring helpful contradictions and legal subterfuge: *PR* §3; cf. *LH* 297–8 (monogamy). Hugo: *PR* §3.

¹⁰⁸ *PR* §3. 'Hegel takes the Institutes to lay down the general principles on which the detailed case-law collected in the Pandects is based, but that is not quite true of the books in question' (Knox and Houlgate, *PR*: 329).

¹⁰⁹ *Spirit of the Laws* 1.3. The definition stretches back through the natural-law tradition to Plato *Laws* 714a1–2 ('*nomos* [is] the distribution (*dianomē*) of *nous*'); Aristotle *Politics* 1287a28–32 ('*nomos* is *nous* without desire'). For Hegel too, 'every genuine law' objectifies Mind (*EM* §539). Gans applies Hegel's UPI triplet to Roman distinctions: edicts and *leges* are 'law in the form of universality', rescripts are 'law in the form of particularity', and special privileges represent law in the form of 'singularity', *ius singulare* or *einzelne Gesetz* (in Hoffheimer 1995: 27).

logically right: the historically refined *ius gentium* approximates the *ius naturale*, the law itself.

All these considerations inform what is perhaps Hegel's key proposal: a written statute-book or code. This had been proposed for German states by Thibaut, and immediately criticized by Savigny, who advocated instead a class of legal historians engaged in an ongoing critique of laws.¹¹⁰ Against the arguments that local custom is more vitally compelling than written codes, and that such codes must remain incomplete, Hegel opposes the 'monstrous confusion' in English law, where precedent rules, every judge is a legislator, and lawyers monopolize the law behind their quarto-tomes and archaic Latin-French. Such opacity is akin to the injustice perpetrated by Dionysius, the Sicilian tyrant, who placed his laws too high to be read.¹¹¹ Moreover, Savigny's criticism is an 'insult' to a thinking people, for customs implicitly contain ethical universals, and to elicit and articulate these universals is tantamount to thinking itself.¹¹² A people's moral spirit therefore demands to be thought out and objectified in a code that is 'well-arranged and clear cut'. Napoleon's Code lurks in the background, and Hegel can praise Napoleon 'the great professor of constitutional law'.¹¹³ In *PR*, however, it is Justinian's Code that is adduced as the classic case of legal systematization: a 'great act of justice'.¹¹⁴

The degree to which its modern equivalent will be 'complete' is left somewhat unclear, however. Hegel recognizes that it 'ought to be a comprehensive whole' yet must also develop with society. The antinomy is solved, effectively, by making *PR* the universal framework which will organically generate ever more determinate provisions—on the analogies of Euclidean axioms and their theorems, the Fifth Commandment and further laws about murder, a tree and its branches.¹¹⁵ So too, Hegel would allow judges discretion in applying law to individual cases, but one wonders whether with time this discretion would be whittled away by law-makers, as 'utopia' evolves into ever greater conformity with the rational will. If so, a consistent Hegelian jurisprudence might revise the Latin adage to read '*de minimis*

¹¹⁰ Thibaut: *Über die Notwendigkeit eines allgemeinen bürgerlichen Rechts in Deutschland* (1814). Savigny: *Vom Beruf unserer Zeit für Gesetzgebung und Rechtswissenschaft* (1815).

¹¹¹ 'Monstrous confusion': *PR* §211R; cf. §215R (Dionysius, learned tomes, dead language).

¹¹² *PR* §211R. Compare Savigny's ambition 'both to purify Roman law from its adulteration by decadent non-Roman elements and to bring out the universal principles inherent in the texts' (Stein, 1999: 118, italics added).

¹¹³ Napoleonic Code: A. Wood 1991: 447 n.2. Napoleon as 'professor': Butler and Seiler 1984: 141; cf. 159–60.

¹¹⁴ *PR* §215R.

¹¹⁵ *PR* §216A.

immo vero curat lex: about the smallest things, rational law *does* care, and the finest-grained code emerges from the infinite Concept—a vision for which Hegel might well have invoked Plato and Aristotle.¹¹⁶

The jurisconsults who deliver the completed statute-book are quasi-democratic in that they articulate the nation's will in its *longue durée*. A democratic element is intended also in Hegel's ordering of the court-system, tasked with applying universal laws to individual cases.¹¹⁷ In the Hegelian trial, the judge first prepares the case by abstracting relevant detail and bringing it under relevant laws;¹¹⁸ then, having been guided by the judge, a popular jury attends to questions of fact and intention; finally, these particulars are synthesized with the universal law in the judge's verdict. This UPI triad of stages allows the trial to represent and reconcile the wills of criminal and community alike. Throughout, the accused's 'right of self-consciousness' is to be respected: he is informed of law and procedures; he is entrusted to 'the subjectivity of jurors', his equals in class, so that he may see himself as *they* see him and so respect their judgment as his *own* and not a decree from on high.¹¹⁹ That is, the court is so constituted that the criminal effectively passes judgment on himself—and if guilty, wills his own punishment. In other words, the court is to be the 'universal legalized conscience' of community and criminal alike.¹²⁰ This analysis throws light on, and may be partially informed by, Hegel's praise for the 'excellent provision' in Athenian courts, by which condemned defendants proposed an appropriate penalty: a provision that encouraged them to recognize their own guilt and align their will with the court's.¹²¹

While Hegel's courts have some ancient precedent, the essentially modern innovation of the 'police' has no direct analogue in his Greece and Rome. In his reckoning, courts can respond only to particular crimes, and their

¹¹⁶ Discretion: PR §214. 'Well-drawn laws should themselves define all the points they possibly can and leave as few as may be to the decision of the judges': Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1.1, 1354a–b; cf. *Politics* 3.12, 1282b. In Plato's *Laws*, 'king' law is made as detailed as possible (see W.D. Desmond 2011a: 35–40).

¹¹⁷ Gans notes how liberal for the time was Hegel's advocacy of 'open judicial proceedings, open assembly meetings, and trials by jury' (cited in Hoffheimer 1995: 8).

¹¹⁸ A precedent adduced by Hegel is the Roman *praetor's* practice of articulating the relevant laws before handing actual judgment to a civilian *iudex*: PR §225R.

¹¹⁹ PR §228.

¹²⁰ LP 1.443; cf. 1.438–9, LH 422–3.

¹²¹ The context for this remark (LP 1.440–2) is Socrates' trial, which Hegel regards as something of an anomaly, in that Athenian (and Roman) law made little provision for *crimina publica* (PR §102R; cf. §218R). Though the modern state treats all crimes as crimes against the whole people, it is strong enough to forgo extreme punishments, which therefore are progressively milder than in an early society, like Draco's for instance (§96).

remedial justice can only do so much to reconcile the individual to the community. Crime, grounded in freedom, can appear in endlessly creative ways, and so to prevent and resolve external wrongs before they happen, there arises the need for 'police' with powers correspondingly illimitable in scope. Detecting and punishing law-breakers, protecting property, monitoring and regulating market transactions (e.g. public prices, weights, measures), and such diverse matters as 'lighting the streets, building bridges, taxation of daily wants, even health'¹²² may all come under 'police' jurisdiction. Ancient states, as conceived by Hegel, really have nothing corresponding to this. The patriotic citizens of his Athens and Sparta seem to know little or no domestic crime, while his Romans are awed into obedience by the *immediate* power of the state—the magistrates and lictors, or emperor and praetorians. Nor does he reflect on the 'police' powers of the bureaucrat-priests and scribes of Egypt, the *astynomoi*, *agoranomoi*, *metronomoi*, and Scythian archers of Athens, the urban cohorts of Rome, or the legionaries' work as builders of roads, bridges, and aqueducts.¹²³

Hegel also tends to miss ancient antecedents to the police supervision of education and income. These become necessary, in his analysis, only as the family loses the direct economic and political roles it anciently had. Under modern conditions the family gives up its grown children to civil society, that 'monstrous power' that makes each person 'work for it, owe everything to it, and do everything by its means'.¹²⁴ So that the orphaned individual can become a 'son of the civil society', it must prepare its adoptee for his new station: each person, therefore, has a right and duty to *public* education, as well as a right and duty to work for an income. The latter provision was anticipated by the Athenian law that each citizen demonstrate a trade or legitimate source of income, but unlike Fichte, who accepts the idea,¹²⁵ Hegel recognizes that modern economies are troubled by the unprecedented paradox of industrial poverty. Having shifted people out of the countryside, broken the extended family, and placed individuals in precarious interdependence on others, the market system produces both unprecedented wealth and unprecedented poverty. Larger markets and large profits conspire to make production processes ever more abstract and machine-like,

¹²² PR §236A.

¹²³ Aristotle's survey of Greek officials, neglected by Hegel: *Politics* 6.8. Roman *populus*' habitual subservience: PR §269A, LH 288 et al. Praetorian Guard: PR §271A.

¹²⁴ PR §238A (*ungeheure Macht*).

¹²⁵ Education: PR §239. Work, Athenian law: §240 (the source is Herodotus 2.177, who attributes the law to Solon and ultimately the Pharaoh Amasis). Fichte: 2000: §18.

and so drive out trained artisans, lower the price of unskilled work, and with time create an army of reserve labourers who drift resentfully at the margins, having lost everything—even the ‘consolations of religion’.¹²⁶ The very success of the economic system creates a class of paupers without the skills, self-respect, and even will to help themselves: paradoxically, a system of wilful self-interest creates a class of will-less persons. Hegel adduces English paupers and Neapolitan *lazzaroni* as examples of the modern ‘rabble’, defined not so much by material poverty as by its ‘inner indignation’ against everything.¹²⁷ Here he might well have also adduced traditional narratives of the Roman mob, thrust by the complexity of empire from the countryside to the City, where they lost the will for everything except ‘two things alone—bread and circuses’.¹²⁸

The Roman emperors’ large-scale response to mass unemployment hints at Hegel’s preferred solution to industrial poverty. In his view, private almsgiving is morally commendable, but insufficient; a public dole would make the poor clients of the state, rob them of self-determination through work, and so exacerbate the problem; so too would the provision of employment, for the underlying problem is overproduction driving down wages, and the paradox that ‘despite an excess of wealth civil society is not rich enough’.¹²⁹ The paradox of wealth creating poverty finds a solution, Hegel argues, only when civic society expands beyond itself. The *systematic* overproduction of goods and people can be addressed only by *systematically* exporting both—sending out colonies of surplus poor, to seed new societies in new lands, and create new markets to employ those who stay at home. In retrospect, one may find here the roots of Lenin’s argument that ‘late imperial capitalism’ caused the European scramble for colonies. Hegel’s mind is rooted more in the past. Between modern colonization (of the New World and Russian Asia) and ancient Greek colonization around the Mediterranean and Black Seas, Hegel prefers the latter as more *systematic*: modern emigration tends to be piecemeal and ‘sporadic’, while the Greeks sent out a body of land-hungry citizens to found a new city in a single act. In addition, Greek colonies were independent, and their free self-determination benefited their mother-cities, in sharp contrast to the costly revolts that rewarded the domineering policies of the English and Spanish

¹²⁶ PR §241. ¹²⁷ PR §244.

¹²⁸ Juvenal *Satires* 10.77–81. For remarks on the ‘mob’ (*Pöbel*) of the late Republic, see LH 310–11.

¹²⁹ Private charity: PR §242. Public dole, work, paradox: §245. For more on pauperism and ‘Hegel’s rabble’, see Ruda 2013.

crowns: Simón Bolívar (1783–1830) was an almost exact contemporary of Hegel.¹³⁰

A second institutional solution to the modern problem of poverty is the maintenance of the corporation as a pillar of civic society. While colonies provide land for new agricultural communities, the corporation belongs more to the reflective business class, as artisans and specialists cluster together for mutual support. The corporation controls entry, maintains standards, regulates pay, helps its members as a kind of 'second family', while also promoting and representing the trade among the larger public. To belong to a corporation thus affords both material security and social recognition. By giving its members an internal corporate identity, it educates them to their external public role, and so socializes their trade, knitting individual workers into the social fabric even more effectively than the family and system of needs.¹³¹ Hegel's corporation anticipates Marx's factory as the cradle of class-consciousness, but, once again, Hegel's mind is rooted more in the past. In attempting to modernize the medieval guild system as a politico-economic institution, he might well have drawn on striking parallels with the Roman *collegia*, the study of which was just emerging: the Roman *collegia* also tended to comprise individuals pursuing a shared trade or activity; they took on some of the trappings and nomenclature of officialdom, and were incorporated as legal personalities by Roman authorities, very possibly as another means of integrating subjects into the Roman order.¹³²

¹³⁰ Greek and modern colonies: PR §248A; cf. LH 230–3 where, echoing Thucydides' Archaeology, Hegel understands Archaic colonization in the context of increasing trade, wealth, growing populations, and a deepening rift between poor and rich. Hegel notices Rome's colonial expansion in the period of its 'maturity' from the Punic Wars to Augustus, but does not comment on its quasi-systematic nature: LH 305ff. A precedent for Hegel's analysis may be Smith's 'Of Colonies' (*Wealth of Nations*, IV.7.1).

¹³¹ PR §250–6. 'Second family': §252.

¹³² Hegel's remarks on the lack of 'a gradation of circles of social life' [e.g. corporations] to mediate between Emperor and subjects (LH 317) suggest a neglect of the Lanuvio fragments, whose 1816 discovery prompted Mommsen's seminal monograph, *De collegiis et sodaliciis Romanorum* (1843). For a brief history of Roman *collegia*, see Perry 2006: 5–7. For the rich mosaic of voluntary associations (of e.g. shepherds, fishermen, bakers, tanners, dyers, goldsmiths, doctors, firemen, mystics of Apollo, praise-singers of the emperor) across the ancient Mediterranean, see Kloppenborg and Wilson 1996. Roman authorities could welcome *collegia* for promoting the 'internalization of social norms': Arnaoutoglou 2002: 42. On the other hand, Hegel did not anticipate how modern working men's associations could mutate into revolutionary ones (e.g. the 'League of the Just'); analogously, he ignores the class-dimension to *stasis* in the Greek *polis* (Chroust 1954, Conor 1972: 25–34), and neglects Roman authorities' fears of *collegia*, *sodalitates*, and *hetaireiai* as potential 'states within the state' (e.g. Trajan to Pliny *Epistulae* 10.33–4).

In summary, Hegel's innovative account of civil society bolsters his reputation as the first great thinker of modernity. In his ideal ordering, civil society mediates between the privacy of familial love and the public, rational arena of the state. Seemingly a realm unto itself that obeys its own laws, it is yet structured by the same dialectic as other spheres, and can therefore be integrated fully into the body politic. Only the modern state succeeds in doing this: its *system of needs* makes wealth a communal product; its *administration of justice* (law, courts) and *police* actively safeguard property and contracts, as abstract right does not; it disrupts the intimacy of the family, but via a second, *corporate* 'family' lends its members a higher class and proto-civic identity; though it threatens to usurp the state as the final form of association, it actually bolsters the state by its productive dynamism, and is in turn benefited by the state's bureaucratic supervision. In all, Hegelian civil society is at once free and 'embedded', and in both aspects thoroughly modern: both effect and cause of the unprecedented liberty of modern subjects.

Hegel's claim that civil society is a uniquely modern phenomenon has been generally accepted. The *corollary* claim, that civil society was absent from the Greek *poleis* and Roman world, is touched on only very lightly. His exposition does touch on ancient precedents (e.g. law codes, courts, colonization), but so sporadically that he misses much of potential interest. The Greek case includes at least the following: the proverbial 'good *eris*' that set 'potter against potter' in productive rivalry; specialists' self-segregation in the *agora*; dynamic markets like those of Athens or Alexandria that encouraged specialization; the presence of commercial metics, somewhat analogous to later European Jews, or Hegel's restless business class; the trade in luxury; the sharp inequalities in the Hellenistic world.¹³³ Hegel ignores Böckh's seminal *Political Economy of the Athenians* (1817): filled with information but light on principle,¹³⁴ this could be called the complement of *PR*, as it treats topics falling under *PR*'s category of administration (e.g. commodity prices, regulation of buildings, jury pay, police control). In the Roman case, Hegel ignores how Cicero provides at least the phrase *societas civilis*; how Rome became a globally connected world-market, served by armies, colonists, *equites*, tax-farmers, and contract law; how labour grew extremely specialized; how great wealth subsisted side by side with great squalor, and how the luxuries of villas, art-collections, and *epulae* were matched by slum

¹³³ Good strife: Hesiod *Opera et Dies* 53–61. Athens's dynamic market: e.g. Thucydides 2.38.

¹³⁴ It does betray *some* reading of Rousseau (1817: 162–3).

insulae, gladiatorial spectacles, and the *sportula*. In imperial Rome 'everything was for sale', and though outward colonization eventually ceased to relieve and energize old centres, there did arise *collegia* as second families, capturing something of the intimacy of the older *poleis* within Rome's world-empire. In these and other ways, ancient phenomena and Hegel's 'civil society' may prove mutually illuminating.

2.2.3.3. State: Patriotism, Constitution, Great Men, War

The failure of ancient societies to give family and civil society their proper place is bound up, from a Hegelian perspective, with their failure to fully understand the state. For Hegel, this is not an immediately natural entity—an extension of the family, tribe, or *gens*.¹³⁵ Nor is it the immediate result of an act of will—a contract between atomistic wills, or political 'work of art'.¹³⁶ Rather, the true state for Hegel is the *mediated* product of all history; as the realized *telos* of human development, it is the Good, the final object and objectification of the will. In stronger language, the state is 'an earthly divinity', the 'absolute power on earth', and the 'march of God in the world'. As such, history comprises a 'series of conceptions of the Eternal',¹³⁷ for each historical people will fashion for itself its own 'mortal god' to fear and revere. But in his revision of Hobbes, Hegel recalls a milder spirit of antiquity when he associates the state with 'the spirit of a people (Athena for instance)... the divine knowing and willing itself': Oriental despots cast an aura of tyrannical godhead over their slavish peoples, but the divinity of *Roma* and Roman emperors was a projection of the people's own manifold purposiveness.¹³⁸ A different metaphor recalls Greek temples and Egyptian pyramids to designate the state as the 'great architectonic structure, or hieroglyph of reason'.¹³⁹ Yet another favoured metaphor can invoke Aristotle, Livy, and Romantic biology: the state is the 'self-relating organism' whose inner principle (i.e. 'soul') expands and differentiates itself into particular organs of government, civil society, family, and law.¹⁴⁰ Such metaphors reflect Hegel's central idea of the state as a concrete universal

¹³⁵ Not immediately natural: *PR* §146. Not family writ large: §181R; cf. Aristotle *Politics* I.

¹³⁶ Not contractual: *PR* §258R; cf. Guthrie 1971: 135–47 on Sophistic contract theories. Not a work of art: §258A.

¹³⁷ 'Earthly divinity': *PR* §272A. 'March of God': § 258A; cf. §75A, *EM* 384A ('series of conceptions'), Avineri 1974: 176–93 and Kainz 1996: 113–24 (Hegel's 'kingdom of God'). 'Absolute power on earth': *PR* §331.

¹³⁸ Athena: *PR* §257R. On Hegel, Hobbes, and their ancient hinterlands, see Peperzak 1995.

¹³⁹ Building, hieroglyph: *PR* §279A.

¹⁴⁰ *PR* §§259, 263A (state like nervous system), 269A, 276A (Agrippa's fable of the belly).

whose parts reflect the individual's will. In this objective other, the citizen can be 'at home', and feel a kind of self-conscious love (or at least respect) for it, as the ground of his worldly being.¹⁴¹

This is the Hegelian understanding of 'patriotism'—that republican 'God-word' that owes so much to antiquity. Montesquieu had made this 'love of one's country' the moving spirit of democratic republics, and in the time of the new US and French republics, patriots turned most for inspiration to the Three Hundred, the Horatii, Cincinnatus, and other heroes of ancient virtue. Hegel himself dismisses such 'pragmatic' use of ancient history as shallow, and with Montesquieu locates patriotism not in acts of extraordinary self-sacrifice so much as in 'political disposition', the consciousness of belonging that inspires more humble participation as owner, family-member, worker, juror, and so forth.¹⁴² It is in fulfilling daily duties that the patriot truly 'loves' his 'fatherland' as the source of his freedom, rights, and being. Namely, the patriot is conscious that his duties and rights are correlative, mutually supporting and therefore 'identical'.¹⁴³ On this consciousness of the state as one's highest object of will, 'everything depends'. Force alone cannot bind a people radically alienated from the state,¹⁴⁴ and *all* states must be animated to some degree by the patriotic temper. In ancient states, 'the subjective end simply coincided with the state's will', without the mediation of citizens' conscience.¹⁴⁵ In the Greek 'democracies', the assembled people *are* the state, and happily take as the 'grand object' of their lives 'their country in its living and real aspect—this actual Athens, this Sparta, these temples, these altars, this form of social life, this union of fellow-citizens, these manners and customs'.¹⁴⁶ Roman patriotism is less aesthetically immediate: citizens instinctively obey their magistrates, even in time of insurrection, and patriotism was indeed 'the dominant instinct of Rome'. Yet given Rome's nature, its patriotism was oriented towards 'sovereignty and military force', and so after its pan-Mediterranean triumphs (over Carthage, Macedonia, etc), it could find no external object, and transmuted into the 'lust of merely personal dominion', to its own eventual ruin.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴¹ Familial love and state patriotism: *EM* §535.

¹⁴² Shallow didactic history: *LH* 6. Montesquieu: *Spirit of the Laws*, Advertisement; cf. IV.5 (patriotism as 'self-renunciation . . . the love of the laws and of our country . . . [which] requires a constant preference of public to private interest'). 'Political disposition': *PR* §267–8.

¹⁴³ *PR* §261.

¹⁴⁴ 'Everything depends' on patriotism: *PR* §261A. Limitations of force: §268A.

¹⁴⁵ *PR* §261A. ¹⁴⁶ *LH* 253; cf. *LA* 1.509, 2.122 (Aristophanes a 'true patriot').

¹⁴⁷ Roman obedience: *PR* §269A, *LA* 2.1074 (Livy's Fable of Agrippa (1.2.32) mentioned). Dominant instinct: *LH* 306; cf. Mommsen's sketch of the 'Italian character', for which the state

Patriotism is justified by and directed to the constitution. Hegel's 'utopia' will have a mixed constitution: the bicameral *legislature* will establish the universal law; the *executive* will apply it to particular cases and prepare the ground for possible new legislation; and the *monarch* will ratify final decisions. Each organ of government is to be separate, yet integrated, a 'totality' that mirrors all the others in its own dominant mode.¹⁴⁸ The triad's political 'logic' is clear, but it also synthesizes two older classificatory systems. The first, ancient categorization—into democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy, according to numbers of rulers—assumes that the state is a homogeneous whole, with no real internal differences (e.g. a monarchy has no democratic features), and that *any* collection of people can be organized into any constitutional form. This quantitative view (i.e. of Aristotle, Polybius) was true for 'the ancient state', which was a 'substantive, still undivided unity', but failed even there to take account of the subjective character of a people.¹⁴⁹ For, *pace* Aristotle, the same people cannot be organized under a new arrangement of offices (as Aristotle defines the constitution), but can produce and bear only that constitution appropriate to its cultural level. That is, a constitution mirrors the spirit of a people: a constitution is begotten, not made, one being with a nation's historical being, through whom all citizens can will themselves.¹⁵⁰ This is Hegel's reworking of Montesquieu, who classified republics (with democracies and aristocracies as subspecies), tyrannies, and monarchies according to the principal motive or 'spirit' animating them—virtue, fear, and honour, respectively. Hegel's world-history is deeply indebted to this classification as it sees history

is 'all in all' (*History of Rome*, I.II). Unchallenged *imperium* perverts patriotic instinct: *LH* 311–12. In general, Hegel passes by the myriad stories of Greek and Roman patriotism, as William Fend does *not* in his essay, 'Patriotism: or, the love of our country' (1804).

¹⁴⁸ Hegel's constitution significantly resembles the 1819 proposals by von Hardenberg, W. von Humboldt, and von Altenstein for a written, mixed constitution, comprising limited monarchy, upper house (hereditary aristocracy) and lower house (delegates from corporations): see Houlgate 2011: 5–7.

¹⁴⁹ *PR* §273R; cf. *EM* §544 (ancient division informs whole 'history of the State').

¹⁵⁰ Aristotle's definition: *Politics* 1274b32–4; cf. *EM* §539 (constitution as 'organization of state-power'). Hegel neglects the *phronēsis* of Aristotle's *nomothetēs*, who tailors universal forms to particular material given him (e.g. *Politics* 2.12, 7.4). Quasi-Nicaean language: *PR* §273R; cf. §§274A, 298, and *LP* 2.8 for the tradition that an older Plato refused to draw up constitutions for Cyrene and Arcadia—as if realizing (post-*Republic*) that a constitution is 'something divine and spiritual, which develops in time'. Hegel neglects the Greek analogy between constitutions and souls, or the metaphor of a city's 'soul': e.g. Plato *Republic*, Aristotle *Politics* 3.3, Isocrates *Areopagiticus* 14e, Libanius 18.147; cf. W.D. Desmond 2011a: 138, 220 n.103. He does not stress how aware Romans were of the organic nature of their constitution: Polybius 6.10; cf. Dudley 1960: 38.

sweeping from Oriental tyrannies to Greek and Roman republics to the monarchies of 'Germanic' Europe.¹⁵¹

As Hegel's constitution integrates elements of these past worlds, let us dwell on each of its parts in turn. First in honour comes the constitutional monarch, to whom is reserved the right and duty to pronounce the great 'I will' of the state, ratifying the assemblies' legislation and his council's legal advice. As the embodiment of the state's general will, he is a public person with a *maiestas* beyond faction and contingency, and to such a high personage accession by election or competition would be inappropriate: the monarch should succeed by the *necessity* of birth. This rationalization of the Germanic principle of primogeniture does not mean that the monarch inherits the kingdom by direct divine right, as a personal possession, or as the result of talent or the *natural* fact of birth. The origin and quality of the dynasty is unimportant: only let there be one, for only when focused on some single figurehead can a people be truly unified.¹⁵² Such practical considerations justifying a king-producing peerage converge on the more abstract claim that reason itself must be particularized in a natural individual, that the substantial will of the nation must be embodied in an actual 'subject'. 'Grounded in the essential nature of the state itself', the monarchical principle must appear in some form in *all* states: in democracies and aristocracies too, there must always be some individual who leads, or is seen to lead.¹⁵³

Hegel's examples from antiquity are not all immediately obvious. He does not turn to Spartan *basileis* or Athenian *stratēgoi* as quasi-monarchical figures. He does not accept at face value Plato's ideal philosopher-monarch. This figure has inspired 'a hundred political romances', but in fact Plato's proposal is a 'piece of great presumption'. Philosopher-kings presume to *consciously* graft universals onto particular laws and institutions when in fact the true constitution and genuine patriotism emerge only over centuries of political education. Therefore, Plato's ambitions to revolutionize Syracuse were bound to fail, while modern states, inheriting history's deeper, slower rationality, do not need rulers to 'have the Idea', i.e. be philosophers. The *philosophes* were wrong to associate the Platonic ideal with enlightened modernity: Hegel recognizes only *one* modern philosophical king—

¹⁵¹ Montesquieu's 'depth of insight': *PR* §273R.

¹⁵² Majesty: *PR* §281. For Gibbon, royal primogeniture benefits modern Europe and was disastrously absent in the Roman Empire (1994, Chapter 7).

¹⁵³ *PR* §§279–80; *LH* 427–8; *LA* 209–10 ('ruling dynasty and the peerage... grounded in the essential nature of the state').

Frederick the Great.¹⁵⁴ Beyond the Platonic tradition, the Greek world offers Hegel several other proto-monarchs. Pericles, as 'the Zeus of the human Pantheon of Athens', is a king of sorts who certainly 'ruled the state'.¹⁵⁵ Oracles and portents were the conduits for the 'monarchical' will of the gods, and as the greatest oracle, Delphic Apollo was Greece's 'final arbiter, its monarchical principle'. The sack of Delphi by Jason of Pherae symbolizes the death of this uncrowned god-king. His revival in the 'godlike' Hellenistic kings is a further step that Hegel does not explore.¹⁵⁶

The Roman emperors, by contrast, are important precedents for Hegel's monarchs. 'Caesar inaugurated the modern world on the side of reality': at the end of the Republic, 'colossal individualities arose' to bestride the declining state, and none more colossal than Julius Caesar, who, 'judged by the great scope of history, did the right' in conquering Gaul, invading Germany, and mastering the Roman world.¹⁵⁷ He thus inaugurated the Empire, yet under subsequent Caesars, the virtues of a Marcus or vices of a Commodus would have little effect. Good emperors and capricious despots came and went, yet the political system itself continued to function effectively.¹⁵⁸ It was as if the emperors' disposition, education, and actions were inconsequential before the substantive will of the whole, which rested quietly on reverence for ancient law—as if in that lawful empire the Caesars were slowly taking on the function of the bureaucratic monarchs of Hegel's state. It is perhaps for this reason that Hegel neglects the *political* history of the Empire, and it is perhaps because he regarded the Empire as a proto-*Rechtsstaat*, intermediate between ancient republics and Europe's evolving monarchies, that he judged Caesar a proto-modern, and chose to call

¹⁵⁴ See LP 2.5–7 on Plato's Sicilian visits, source of many 'political romances' (2.6). Plato's 'great presumption', 'have the Idea': 2.24. *Pace* Voltaire et al., Marcus Aurelius' private philosophical virtue left the Roman Empire 'no better': 2.26. Frederick was a 'philosophical king—an altogether peculiar and unique phenomenon in modern times' (LH 437)—not because he studied Wolffian metaphysics but because as 'first servant of the state' he aimed at its 'universal well-being' (LP 2.26), and because as martial 'hero of Protestantism' he defended the truth of Lutheranism (LH 437–8).

¹⁵⁵ LH 261, LP 1.322.

¹⁵⁶ Oracles: PR §279R. The metaphorical 'killing' of Apollo (Greece's 'monarchical principle') 'completes the ruin of Greece': LH 271; cf. Julian 6.188a (Delphic Apollo as 'king of Hellas'). Remarks on Aristotle *Politics* 1284a3–b2 suggest that in Hegel's mind the *Zeitgeist* of late classical Greece was turning its favours towards kingship (e.g. of Alexander), now that 'the Greek Democracy had entirely fallen into decay' (LP 2.210).

¹⁵⁷ Inaugurated modernity: LH 318. Caesar judged: LH 312.

¹⁵⁸ *Rechtsstaat*: EM §544; the Hegelian F.J. Stahl is credited with its standard definition (Whitman 1990: 101). Emperors' virtue or vice makes no difference: LR 2.510–11 (1824), LP 2.26, 2.273–4; cf. Barker 1923: 71 ('we may argue with almost equal cogency that Roman Law implies absolutism, and that it implies constitutionalism').

attention to his constitutional monarch's 'I will' as marking the 'great difference between the ancient and modern world'.¹⁵⁹

If Hegel's Caesars partially take on the role of his constitutional figure-heads, he does not directly pursue ancient precedents for the other branches of government, the executive and legislature. His executive (comprising police, judiciary, and other officers) are appointed by the monarch to apply laws to individual cases—a task of continuous oversight that cannot be entrusted to Herculean heroes of virtue, as we have seen, but requires a class of individuals imbued with the spirit of customary patriotism.¹⁶⁰ Unique to modern states, this 'universal' class is absent from undeveloped ones like Russia, with its aristocrats and serfs—or, one might add, from Hegel's Greece and Rome, with its masters/slaves and rulers/ruled, respectively. Hegel's association of it with the middle class, however, has been called 'more Aristotelian than modern', as if Hegel were revisiting Aristotle's admiration for a middle class as the locus of virtue and social equilibrium.¹⁶¹

The executive class will be the most politically conscious, yet Hegel also recommends assemblies as a means of integrating the sovereign people into the constitutional process. An upper assembly will represent the 'substantial' class (farmers and nobility), while the lower assembly will contain experienced representatives of the corporations. Here Hegel effectively shares the patriarchal and 'Roman' outlook of the US Federalists: participation can educate the people to a more universal perspective, but it should be a mediated form of participation—in Hegel's case, via bodies of class representatives. For Hegel, the state can recognize only what is universal in citizens, and so indirect representation will better reflect citizens' social roles than will assemblies of individual delegates, let alone the people in an unorganized atomistic mass—the unruly assemblies of Aristophanes, Thucydides, and Plato. And yet, for Hegel, it remains fundamentally true that 'the people' is sovereign—*vox populi, vox dei*—and so its will should be respected as an objective fact. Yet what is the will of the people? How is it expressed? Who knows it? The people's will is rooted in the history of their community, in the history of mankind, and in human nature itself, and in this most profound sense, no assembly of random individuals can arrogate to itself the authority of representing the people's will—or even its own: 'the

¹⁵⁹ PR §279A; cf. §273R.

¹⁶⁰ PR §296.

¹⁶¹ Russia: §297A. 'More Aristotelian': Kelly 1978: 139. Suter is more audacious: 'While Hegel's conception of the middle class as the stabilizing element in the state reminds us of Aristotle (*Politics* 1295b), the Hegelian civil servant... points to Lenin's professional revolutionary' (1971: 70 n.136).

people', understood as a particular number of the citizens [i.e. the many], 'does not know what it wills'.¹⁶² It must therefore be guided by the best representatives of its various sections, and so with his scheme for assemblies, Hegel seeks to enact the true spirit of democratic equality and liberty—those ancient watchwords.¹⁶³

Nevertheless, his evaluation of 'the people' remains deeply ambivalent, an ambivalence epitomized in the paradox that public opinion should 'be respected and despised'.¹⁶⁴ It should be despised in its immediacy, but respected when sifted and synthesized by more reflective individuals—by class representatives, and ideally by that leader or 'great man of the age', who knows what is in his people's heart, who can 'tell his age what its will is, and accomplish it'.¹⁶⁵ This figure may bear some resemblance to the 'wise legislators' of the republican imagination, as well as to Hegel's world-historical individuals, who, cresting the World-Spirit, know better than the people what the people truly desire.¹⁶⁶ But Hegel's remarks about Pericles would seem to make *him* the classic example of the 'great man'. For as chief architect of the Classical Spirit, the one who truly knew his people's will both by personal acquaintance and by higher philosophical insight (as associate of Anaxagoras and Protagoras), Pericles gave himself wholly to the people, and submitted himself to the judgment of the people, 'the real and noblest power'. At the same time, he was able to 'rule' the people so as to bring forth their highest potencies in freedom. He thus attained what is almost unheard of in political life: 'the power of ruling over the will of men who have but one will'. This Hegelian interpretation of Pericles' 'Olympian' style may be said to revisit Thucydides' regal democrat as well as Plutarch's quasi-philosophic

¹⁶² The quote continues: "To know what one wills, and still more to know what the will in and for itself, reason, wills, is the fruit of profound cognition and insight, precisely the things which are *not* the characteristic of "the people"" (PR §301R); cf. Plato's dictum, 'the people (*plēthos*) cannot be a philosopher' (*Republic* 494a4).

¹⁶³ Assemblies as political education: PR §§301, 315, EM §544. Organized delegates needed: §§303, 308R. Nation as organized *populus*, not a mere aggregate or *vulgus* (epitomized in undisciplined assemblies): EM §544; cf. Thucydides 4.28; Plato *Republic* 487e–89c, 492a–94b. Equality and liberty concretely enacted only in the modern state: EM §539.

¹⁶⁴ PR §318. Hegel neglects the ancient trope of Rumour (*Fama*), as in Ovid *Metamorphoses* 12.42–63 and Virgil *Aeneid* 4.173–90, with precedents in Homer *Iliad* 2.93, 4.442–3, *Odyssey* 24.412, Hesiod *Opera et Dies* 760–4, and adaptations as late as Goethe's *Römische Elegien* 19.1–2 (see Hardie 2012: 332).

¹⁶⁵ PR §318A; cf. §329A. Hegel's 'classic description' of the 'great man' is the best known to Carr (1990: 54).

¹⁶⁶ LH touches on Moses (197–8), Solon (258–9), and Lycurgus (262–3)—more as historical figures than as the 'wise legislators' of Machiavelli and Rousseau; cf. Avineri for their demotion vis-à-vis Alexander, Caesar, and Napoleon (1974: x).

king: Hegel's Pericles practised the dictum that 'that man is powerful who can deduce the actions of men from the absolute ends which move them'—a dictum that resonates with Protagoras' rhetoric, Anaxagoras' cosmology, and even the Hegelian Good, as it draws all towards patriotic love of their state. By orienting his contemporaries towards the 'absolute ends' that they only vaguely sensed, Pericles was indeed the 'great man' of his time—and greater in spiritual resources than Charles V, his early-modern counterpart.¹⁶⁷

Legislative, executive, and monarchy—the three branches of the Hegelian constitution are designed to form the 'objective' complement of the citizens' patriotism: mirroring and supporting each other, subjective patriotism and objective constitution together give the modern state its unprecedented unity, equilibrium, and strength.¹⁶⁸ Only such a perfectly rational constitution can inspire citizens' full rational respect, so that they will forgo immediate interests, accept their 'substantial duty', and even die for it when threatened. That duty comes to the fore especially in war, which (Hegel argues) is not 'a purely external contingency', nor even an 'absolute evil', but a necessary part in the life of the state. All that is finite must pass away, and if natural processes expose the finitude of the finite, war does so at a spiritual level: in war, the finite is *actively* willed away for higher ends. War galvanizes the spirit of self-sacrifice. It stimulates the will to forgo its fret over property, family, career, life itself, and by giving itself to that which constitutes its being, gain a higher perpetuation in the greater, transhistorical life of the state. In self-sacrifice, the particular is merged in the concrete universal: Hegel's logical language is duller than the *encomia* of Simonides, the *epitaphios logos* of Pericles, or Livy's patriotic prose. Yet he too seems to apotheosize the patriot, who lives on in the 'divine' life of the state.¹⁶⁹ When

¹⁶⁷ Pericles architect of Athenian 'golden age': *LP* 1.322, 1.393–4, 1.427; cf. *LH* 254, 259–61 ('Zeus of the human Pantheon of Athens'). Pericles' patriotism, 'deep knowledge' of Athens (with Plutarch *Pericles* 5): *LP* 1.373, 1.393–4. His submission to the people: *LP* 1.328, 1.393–4, 1.441 ('the real and noblest power'). 'Ruling over the will of men': *LP* 1.325. 'Sublime' Pericles: 1.427. Pericles and Anaxagoras: *LP* 325–6, 328. Pericles and Protagoras: *LP* 1.357, 372–3. 'Deducing actions': *LP* 1.357. Charles V too lived in times of deepening subjectivity (i.e. Luther ~ Socrates) but lacked the 'inner spirit of Pericles': *LH* 346. On Pericles as democrat and/or 'king', in Thucydides, Plato, and Plutarch, see W.D. Desmond 2011a: 76–8.

¹⁶⁸ *PR* §§260–1; cf. *LP* 2.96 where state is 'excellent' due to its constitution—an idea prominent in e.g. Plato, Polybius, Cicero.

¹⁶⁹ War, substantial duty: *PR* §324. For many ancient authors, war is perennial (Moloney and Williams 2016); Kant offers his own version of Hobbes' state of nature as a *bellum omnium contra omnes* (1994b: §54); for von Clausewitz (1780–1831), Ranke, Droysen, and the 'Prussian School' (Southard 1994; Sigurdson 2004: 60–8; Burrow 2009: 458–9), soldierly courage is the highest virtue, and war the state's highest act of self-expression. Here *PR* §§321–8, and war's

patriotism lapses, by contrast, the sense of the nation decays, individuals sink into the self-aggrandizement of mere civil society, and culture stagnates. Without war nations wither: the thought is classically Prussian, but echoes Gibbon's argument that the long *pax Romana* sank each individual in private self-interest, eroded civic virtue, and half caused the decline of the Roman Empire. Generalizing such thoughts, Hegel inveighs against the ideal of a long, let alone perpetual, peace in which individuals would forget the state—the substance of their subjectivity.¹⁷⁰

Still, Hegel does not forget the horrors of war. Wars return communities to the 'state of nature', where each is alone, force reigns, no 'praetor' adjudicates, and only the strongest survive.¹⁷¹ Yet if the arena of history is amoral, it is not irrational, for it is those states that accord more with *the* rational constitution and Concept that prove materially stronger in the end: laws and arms flourish together, as Machiavelli has it,¹⁷² and Hegel for his part would explain victories of the Greeks over the Persians, of the Romans over the Greeks, and later of the Dutch over the Spanish, as the external effects of superior internal constitutions. National spirit is thus more determinative than material resources. This idealism carries over into Hegel's sense of the providential ordering of world-history. Here the World-Spirit inspires each chosen nation to its moment of supremacy: then it rightly asserts itself over others, before succumbing in turn to a stronger, more rationally organized successor. And so, though history may have no particular 'praetor' to settle differences, in the long term it is presided over by a 'court' which in its providential justice allows only the most true, rational,

appearance at the *end* of the state's development, may bolster Heller's 1921 assimilation of Hegel's state to the Prussian *Machtstaat*. Moreover, conflict reflects at the phenomenal level the contradictions and 'war' within the Concept, as each category (e.g. Becoming) holds opposites in tension (e.g. Being, non-Being)—thus lending Heraclitus' 'war is the father of all things' the deepest resonance. On the other hand, Hegel expected that the modern 'balance of power' and ever tighter cultural unity of the European 'family' of nations would mitigate the destruction, and even the need for war (*PR* §§338–9; cf. Avineri 1974: 204–7): a prophecy sadly disproved by events.

¹⁷⁰ The dialectic of Roman *success* containing the seeds of its *failure* might be detected in Gibbon's discovery 'in the public felicity the latent causes of decay and corruption' (1994 Chapter 2), an analysis reminiscent of Sallust *Jugurtha* 41.5 and Tacitus *Germania* 14.2, and quoted in *NL* 149.

¹⁷¹ No 'praetor': *PR* §§333, 339.

¹⁷² Machiavelli: *Prince*, Chapter 12; cf. Gibbon 1994, Chapter 10 ('In the most polite and powerful nations . . . the age of science has generally been the age of military virtue and success').

and therefore powerful constitution to cling to actuality.¹⁷³ In this dispensation, it is the modern state that is destined to emerge and endure, with a ‘prodigious strength and depth’ unmatched in the less articulated cities and empires of antiquity.¹⁷⁴

2.3. *Lectures on the Philosophy of History:* Ethical Life Evolving

Theoretically, *PR* articulates the ‘concept’ of the state itself, and as it looks ahead to world-history (§§340–60), it would set the state into relation with other states. At one level then, *LH* elaborates the traditional subject-matter of history: the basic unit of history is the state, its inner constitutional developments, its external relations and wars. But at another level, the truest, ‘philosophical’ history does not simply narrate. It must select, judge, and critique—and, for Hegel, this work requires an objective measure by which historical states can be evaluated as more or less ‘true’ to their essence. The ‘utopia’ of *PR* becomes that objective norm—at once formal pattern and historical *telos*. The relation of *PR* to *LH* might, then, be likened to the relation of Plato’s *Republic* to *Timaeus*. As *Timaeus* places a version of the *kallipolis* in a cosmic setting, engaged in an epic war,¹⁷⁵ so *LH* tells of how the state entered space and time, particularized itself into the many historical states, which refracted and developed the elements of *Recht*, imperfectly. Property rights, punishments, degrees of moral subjectivity, family relations, class relations, trade, colonies, constitutional crises, and wars all enter into the life of those past states. Through its history, each people developed the constitution of which it was capable, given its geographical place and temporal situation. At the same time, each nation’s history will theoretically bring it closer to the *true* constitution.¹⁷⁶ A complexity of considerations thus underlies Hegel’s schematic presentation of world-history as a march of civilizations or ‘worlds’, differentiated by their realization of the idea of freedom—that is, by their characteristic constitution—the insights of each

¹⁷³ *PR* §340, *EM* §548 for Schiller’s ‘the history of the world is the world’s court of judgement’. Avineri recalls *PR* §342 (‘world history is not the verdict of mere might’) to caution against the myth that Hegel glorified war (1974: 194–207).

¹⁷⁴ ‘Prodigious strength’: *PR* §260.

¹⁷⁵ Plato *Timaeus* 19b3–c8, 26c7–d3.

¹⁷⁶ See *PR* §§257R, 258A, 260A; cf. *LP* 2.96–7 (‘The true constitution stands before the nation of history, so that it may advance towards it. Every nation in course of time makes such alterations in its existing constitution as will bring it nearer to the true constitution’).

people being taken up by the next, in a cumulative progress towards the Hegelian monarchy. This quasi-Herderian idea is worked out in detail in Hegel's five lecture-series on world history, while *PR* takes just nine paragraphs to summarize the slow ascent from natural savagery through Oriental despotism, Greek democracy, and Roman aristocracy to Germanic monarchy. Even more pithy are Hegel's formulae: world-history is the temporal working out of the concept of objective right. Or: in the Oriental world, *one*; in the Greek and Roman, *some*; and in the Germanic world *all* are free.¹⁷⁷

This tripartite formulation suggests the essential unity of Greek and Roman, but Hegel's actual scheme isolates *four* moments, and tends to place Greece and Rome in sharp dialectical opposition: while both are 'republics' in Montesquieu's sense, the Greek world comprises many 'aesthetic democracies', while the Roman Republic and Empire forms a single, 'predatory' aristocracy. On the other hand, each basic constitution is 'identical' in being governed by the same pattern of development: in its youth, a civilization struggles to synthesize inherited elements from its predecessor and its natural environment; this done—constitution crystallized and way of life (*Sittlichkeit*) established—in the strength of its maturity, the nation turns outwards to 'overreach itself' in wars and colonies, as it overcomes previous world-historical peoples and encounters its successors; in its years of decline, it stagnates, grows more self-reflective, and eventually yields the ghost to a 'younger' world-historical people that will replace it in dynamism and energy.¹⁷⁸ In more concrete terms, Hegel's Greece harmonized Oriental elements in its own distinctive 'beautiful' synthesis, went on to defeat the Oriental nations under the Persian kings, and after Alexander ceded the spark of spiritual energy to Rome. In turn, the early Roman Republic struggled to find an equilibrium between its Orders, which, once gained, allowed it to launch forth on wars of conquest over Greeks, Carthaginians, Syrians, Hebrews, Egyptians, Persians, and other 'Orientals'. On the other hand, Caesar's Gallic wars brought Rome into contact with the Germanic tribes, whose descendants would later flood the Roman world and in doing so absorb the best of its spirit, perpetuating and adapting its laws, religion, and philosophies down through the centuries. The tripartite 'life' that Hegel would give to each world-historical people corresponds best with the Greek

¹⁷⁷ Concept and summary of world history: *PR* §§341–60. Quasi-Herderian: Herder stresses, more than Hegel, the irreducible singularity of each national spirit.

¹⁷⁸ See e.g. *PR* §347, *LH* 224, *EM* §550.

and Roman cases: the Oriental world has no real predecessors; the Germanic world has no successors, for with the completed modern constitution, nothing *fundamentally* new and significant can emerge, and so political history effectively comes to an end.

2.3.1. Beautiful City

Before turning to some details of Hegel's ancient history, let us look at his conceptualization of the Greek city as a 'political work of art' and 'aesthetic democracy'. Like many philhellenes, Hegel writes of the beauty pervading and defining Greek culture. Against the varied loveliness of Aegean seas, blue skies, and sharp mountains, the Greeks carved out their homes, cultivated their bodies in *gymnasia* and *palaistrai*, their minds in assembly and theatre, and in their love for ornament, athletics, dance, song, and the visual arts created the glories of Greek art and its artistic religion (*Kunstreligion*)—the temples, porticoes, statues, odes, and dramatic festivals. So the subjective beauty of the people and the objective beauty of their lived space were elevated into the total work of art that was the *polis*.¹⁷⁹ It would seem that for Hegel no other communities were so constituted. He does not use the term 'political works of art' of Winckelmann's Pompeii, Augustan or Catholic Rome, medieval Byzantium, Renaissance Florence and Venice, or Bourbon Naples: the Hellenophile's *idée fixe* permits no other peoples to be truly aesthetic. Beauty so pervades Hegel's Greek world that its essential political constitution must be an 'aesthetic democracy'. The essentialist verdict seems to ignore the incredible profusion of Greek constitutional forms: did Hegel not know of Homeric and Spartan kingships, of archaic aristocracies, oligarchies, and tyrannies, of the evolution of democracy in Athens, of the ugly facts of Greek war, civil war, *stasis*? In fact his *LH* does touch on all of these, yet still judges the democratic-style republic to be the basic Greek form. As with Montesquieu's democracies, the *polis* sees a plurality of citizens participate freely in all aspects of life, animated by a spontaneous virtue that is not constrained by tyrannical fear, legal contract, or rational choice, but wells up as instinctive patriotism.¹⁸⁰ This patriotism is

¹⁷⁹ For this triad (subjective-objective-political), see *LH* 241–55. *Kunstreligion*: PS §§699–747.

¹⁸⁰ He could also have appealed to Aristotle, who defines citizenship in quasi-democratic terms, as the capacity to 'rule and be ruled in turn' (*Politics* 1277a, 1284a; cf. Plato *Laws* 643e, 942c); who crystallizes the Classical sense that tyrannies and monarchies are outmoded,

not inspired by any abstract concept of 'the state' or revered law code (like the Romans' Twelve Tables), but is directed rather at *these* places, *these* usages, *these* statues and temples, *these* fellow-citizens.¹⁸¹ Such a unity of universal and particular in the *immediacy* of individual feeling can, in Hegel's Kantian aesthetics, be termed 'beautiful'. Similarly aligned with his aesthetic Ideal is his understanding of custom (*nomos*, *Sitte*). Custom subdues the natural self to the habit of virtue, and thus creates a 'second nature'.¹⁸² Elevating the self above the merely natural, custom mediates between natural relations (e.g. family) and deliberate legal constructions, between animal instinct and law-codes, between individual licence and consciously willed harmony. The Greeks inhabit, uniquely, this 'beautiful middle': their patriotism is an *unthinking* identification with objective traditions; in turn, their customary actions directly constitute the ethical order (*Sittlichkeit*). 'What has been is divinely right':¹⁸³ to this aesthetic Greek mind, the Sophistic critique of *nomos* threatens treason, revolution, atheism.

Along such lines, Hegel's designation, 'aesthetic democracy', revises the widespread, though somewhat indeterminate, association of Greece with beauty, art, freedom, and perfection. A full history of this association might trace how the ideal of the 'beautiful soul' led up to the cult of the 'aesthetic state': how Hobbes's brutal vision of human psychology goaded Locke, Shaftsbury, and Hutcheson to notions of 'moral beauty' and unerring intuition of the right; how this moral beauty became a 'master trope' of the Enlightenment, and nowhere more so than in Germany, where

barbarian, or somehow deviant; who recommends the quasi-democratic polity as the generally best practicable state and who suggests that democracy was the most prevalent constitution in his own time—as if political history were indeed inching towards this, its apparent *telos* (*Politics* 3.15, 1286b8–21 with Hansen 2005: 8).

¹⁸¹ LH 272. Hegel's notion of an *immediate*, aesthetic identification of city (U) and citizens (P) is reminiscent of the fact that orators, historians, and others do not speak of Athens or Sparta in the abstract, but of 'the Athenians', 'the Lacedaemonians', as if the gathered people were the state in its transhistorical existence: 'a city is its men' (Alcidamas 35D, Sophocles *Oedipus Tyrannus* 56–7, Thucydides 7.77.7), a proverb perhaps inspiring Cartledge's translation of *polis* as 'citizen-state' (2016: 15, 38; cf. Hansen 2006: 59–60).

¹⁸² PR §151.

¹⁸³ Sophocles *Antigone* 456–7 is a prominent inspiration for Hegel's view that pre-Sophistic Greeks accepted *nomoi* in their immediacy (PS §436; cf. EL 19§A3). It is a commonplace that 'custom is king' (Pindar) among early peoples; Enlightenment critique of mere tradition presented a challenge to Hegel, Burke, de Maistre, and other conservatives: how to inspire a rational reverence for tradition, when reason and reverence seem incompatible? The 'aesthetic democracy' may form part of Hegel's answer: the Greeks' reverence for their beautiful *Sittlichkeit* prepared for the modern ability (e.g. through LH) to be reconciled with the past and to affirm that 'what is, and what has been, is rational'.

Shaftsbury's Platonism mingled with Pietistic notions, Leibnizian ethics, the science of physiognomy (inner goodness is manifested in a fair face), and a reviving fascination with Greek art.¹⁸⁴ Wieland's *schöne Seele* would be quickly forgotten, but the beautiful soul of Winckelmann popularized yet further the ideal association of Greek beauty, freedom, and perfection. His *History of Art* opens with the bold thesis that the freedom of the Greeks' political constitutions and cultural forms was the main cause of their artistic pre-eminence.¹⁸⁵ Freedom plants 'the germ of noble and elevated sentiments', and while Egypt with its absolutist pharaohs had few such germs, they burst forth in full bloom in the Greek golden age, when Periclean democracy and Pheidias' 'Lofty Style' exactly coincided—before the decline of the *polis* and the Hellenistic monarchies blighted freedom and art together. For Winckelmann, thus, the history of art (especially Greek art) illustrates amply how freedom is the *necessary* condition of great art.

The converse position forms the basis of Schiller's *Letters on Aesthetic Education*: an aesthetic sensibility is the necessary condition of perfect moral freedom. Art, beauty, and their source in imaginative 'play' are needed to raise natural man to his rational and ethical perfection. Through the *Letters*, Schiller often goes beyond his Kantian framework to make the aesthetic state not the *means* to an ethical end, but the final *end* itself, and in limning his ideal of a 'universal' citizen who exhibits the 'whole of humanity', he often casts his gaze over the Alps to find it already exemplified in the Olympian gods and individual Greek citizens.¹⁸⁶ Unburdened by an otherworldly Christianity, feudal overlords, employers, class relations, markets, and excessive specialization, this godlike 'Greek' cultivates his imagination and 'play-drive' in athletics, poetry, rhetoric, and all the activities of a balanced life. He is joyfully at home with nature and its sensual deities, with his body, and his free republic, which he serves as voter, juror, soldier, theatregoer, worshipper. For him labour and its products, effort and enjoyment are bound in a seamless whole. By contrast, how pathetic (for Schiller) is the

¹⁸⁴ 'Master trope': Norton 1995: 133; cf. *PS* §§632–71, *PR* §140f (with Wood 1991: 434 n.20 for references to Goethe, Schiller, Novalis, et al.). Tatum 1996 discusses *kalogathia* as a 'deep-seated habit of Greek thought'.

¹⁸⁵ 'It was through freedom that art [among the Greeks] advanced': Winckelmann 2006 [1763]: 299.

¹⁸⁶ Schiller's *aesthetic* state as the synthesis of (rather than the means of mediating) *natural* and *ethical* states: Kain 1982: 27–33. 'Whole of humanity': *Aesthetic Education*, Letter 6 (tr. Snell). For pronouncements about 'the Greek', see especially *Letters* 6, 9, 10 (Pericles, Alexander, and 'the golden age of Art'), 15, 25 (Titanomachy), 26 (aesthetic culture where the 'olive crown' is 'more valued than a purple mantle'), 27 (*Iliad* 3.1–9).

typical modern person: 'everlastingly chained to a little fragment of the whole', he 'develops into nothing but a fragment'. If so, then 'what individual Modern could sally forth and engage, man against man, with an individual Athenian for the prize of humanity?'¹⁸⁷ Thus would Schiller challenge contemporaries to recapture a Greek fullness of life, suggesting that *that* past reality makes practicable the present imperative to an aesthetic existence. Many ardent souls did rise to his challenge. The ideal of an aesthetic education via Greek beauty became a prime inspiration for Wilhelm von Humboldt's system of *gymnasias*, and for Hellenic studies through the nineteenth century generally. The perfect, Greek 'aesthetic state' lingers on in Marx's yearnings for a stateless society where, supported by a maximally efficient economy (rather than by slavery), citizens can cultivate all their capabilities and become universal selves—able 'to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman, or critic'. A beautiful vision indeed: the spectre of a beautiful democracy, undergirded by aesthetic sensibility and education in art, continues to haunt many thinkers and theorists.¹⁸⁸

This idealizing association does, of course, reflect the culture of German philhellenism, and a more general malaise about modern alienation. On the other hand, it is not completely fanciful.¹⁸⁹ The ideal of a well-rounded citizenry was enshrined in the Athenian Funeral Oration, or at least in Thucydides' most famous version of it, when his Pericles sketches the versatility (*eutrapelia*) of the democratic Athenians, as they balance work

¹⁸⁷ 'Fragment of the whole', 'prize of Humanity': Letter 6 (tr. Snell).

¹⁸⁸ On the 'aesthetic state' as a German preoccupation, see Kain 1982, Chytry 1989; Bonds adds Goethe's metaphor of the state as a double symphony-orchestra (2006: 63–78). Nietzsche, Foucault, Rancière, and Scruton owe debts to Schiller: see, respectively, Martin 1996, Bennett 1996, Plot 2014, and Scruton 1998: 30–46. Some theorists: Hirschkop 2000, Docherty 2006, Castronovo, 2007. A remarkable anticipation (and critique) of the aesthetic dilettante of Marx's *German Ideology* is Plato's 'democratic soul' (*Republic* 561b–e), counterpart of that 'most beautiful of constitutions', democracy (*Republic* 557c).

¹⁸⁹ Many commentators assume that the German philhellenes' construct of Greece reveals more about *them* than any historical Greeks: see e.g. Norton 1995: 114 (Enlightenment writers), Hatfield 1943: 21 (Winckelmann), Pugh 2005: 60 (Schiller). Yet Virgil's *Aeneid* 6.847–8 is a considered judgment, and until comparatively recently the modern *communis opinio* has taken the Greeks as *the* superlatively aesthetic people: 'the philosophers of history have been amply justified in characterizing the whole Greek epoch as pre-eminently that of Beauty' (Dickinson 1958 [1886]: 206); 'More than any other race that has ever lived, the Greeks possessed the sense of beauty' (Webster 1913: 601)—two well-informed representatives of the once-dominant understanding. Martindale 2007 would reinvigorate such unapologetically aesthetic approaches.

and pleasure, politics and domestic matters, practicalities and the life of the soul:

when our work is over, we are in a position to enjoy all kinds of recreation for our spirits. There are various kinds of contests and sacrifices regularly throughout the year; in our own homes we find a beauty and a good taste which delight us every day and which drive away our cares . . . Our love of what is beautiful does not lead us to extravagance; our love of the things of the mind does not make us soft. (2.38.1–40.1, tr. Warner)

The last phrase, translated more literally, is: ‘we love beauty (*philokaloumen*) with thrift, and we love wisdom (*philosophoumen*) without softness’. The phrase directly informs Schiller’s generalization that ‘Greek nature . . . united all the attractions of art and all the dignity of wisdom, without, however, becoming the victim of them as does our own’.¹⁹⁰ More succinctly, Periclean *eutrapelia* becomes Schiller’s ‘totality of character’.

The phrase, and context, is equally vital for Hegel. He quotes this very same phrase, gives a rough paraphrase of Thucydides 2.40 (‘profoundly thoughtful, as well as most just and true’) and praises the whole Periclean Funeral Oration as ‘the most profound description of Athenian life’: a historical document exhibiting Athens as ‘a state whose existence was essentially directed to realizing the Beautiful’.¹⁹¹ Yet if such Thucydidean passages influenced Hegel’s innovative conceptualization of *Sittlichkeit*, his category of an ‘aesthetic democracy’ *can* be profitably projected back onto the *epitaphios logos*. Here democratic constitution and democratic character *are* correlatives; the ‘constitution’ educates *these* patriots, and their actions reciprocally constitute and preserve the democratic way of life; Athens itself is captured not in a theoretical treatise on democracy, or a prose history of its deeds, but in this customary speech, this prose song to democratic communitarianism; its rhetorical art evokes, rather than proves, the city’s greatness, and evokes an answering greatness in its patriots, who did not weigh private concerns and public duty, but rushed forth to defend their fatherland, careless of loss and happy to win a ‘beautiful death’ so long as they proved themselves ‘good men’ and worthy of their ancestors. Elaborating such themes, the *epitaphios logos* was sanctioned as effectively the official vehicle for articulating and perpetuating Athenian democratic

¹⁹⁰ Letter 6 (tr. Snell).

¹⁹¹ LH 261.

values for at least 150 years, and as such its testimony to the spirit of Athens is not negligible—and Hegel is right to emphasize it.¹⁹²

Of course, as a partial construction and a species of propaganda, it glosses over the shirkers and slackers, ignores local enmities, litigation, and greed; the ideal of Athens had to be 'invented', or at least promoted as a compelling reality, for more to be persuaded or shamed into deeper civic engagement.¹⁹³ Hegel is fairly silent about this less lovely side. Nevertheless, unlike more uncritical philhellenes, he does emphasize (as we have seen) how the façade of 'aesthetic democracy' rested partly on the ugly facts of slavery: the democracy where only *some* are (superficially) free is a merely aesthetic one—a 'show' (*Schein*) and imperfect appearance, in which the Ideal of freedom had not fully perfused all its members. More positively, Hegel's concept of Classical *aesthetic* democracy—in which citizen-selves, customary practices, and *polis* form a mutually constitutive whole—has a direct bearing on recent theories of *performative* citizenship, which (I suggest) it distinctly and insightfully anticipates.¹⁹⁴

For all its fraught intellectual background, Hegel's notion of an 'aesthetic democracy' does not *quite* serve as the key to his retelling of Greek history. In its fidelity to the available sources, his narrative can wander away from the necessity of the Concept, and follow a path analogous to that of contemporaneous histories like Mitford's (1784–1810), which rely on essentially the same sources. Thus Hegel turns to Homer when discussing the Homeric kingdoms and their heroic culture, the Trojan War, *Nostoi*, and return of the Sons of Heracles—all construed as basically historical. The theorizing of Thucydides' Archaeology is replicated in discussions of the Dark Age, the rise of cities, aristocratic constitutions, inequalities, and the land hunger that drove forth early colonists, often under the guidance of Delphi. The Persian Wars see the triumph of the Greek spirit of customary

¹⁹² The Thucydidean version captures 'better than any document the ideals of Periclean Athens and the spirit which pervades its art' (Pollitt 1972: 68); an idea elaborated in Loraux 2006 [1981]; cf. M. Taylor 2010, Pritchard 2010. The *polis* was 'group oriented' (Pollitt 1972: 10–11, 23) and 'strongly "communitarian"' (Balot 2006: 57): variations of Hegel's pre-Sophistic, customary *polis*.

¹⁹³ 'Enmity culture': Alwine 2015. 'Litigious Athenian': Christ 1998. Greed: Balot 2001.

¹⁹⁴ Farenga 2006, for instance, argues that when Athenian citizens 'perform' roles in various arenas, they not only contribute to democratic culture (as in Goldhill and Osborne 1999) but constitute it: '[democratic] citizenship actually *is* performance' (6), and 'in performing justice the Greeks...enact the interdependence of citizenship and selfhood' (36). Farenga takes Taylor's ideas on selfhood (1989) as authoritative, but forgets *Taylor's* great authority—Hegel (*not* George Meade): Taylor's social 'recognition' and relational self are thinly-veiled adaptations from PS, notably the master-slave dialectic.

freedom: a democratic league of small cities, each animated by the virtue of its citizens, defeats the aggregated force of Darius' and Xerxes' hordes—the most astonishing manifestation of 'the superiority of spiritual power over material bulk'.¹⁹⁵ By this victory of spirit, the unity of the Hellenic world is basically preserved for a short Classical period of sixty years (490–431 BC). Here Sparta and Athens represent twin poles of the Greek spirit, complementary versions of the 'Greek democracy', but Pericles' Athens interests Hegel more, being less one-sided and better able to foster free genius in so many varieties.¹⁹⁶ The clash of Athens and Sparta in the Peloponnesian War brings no real victors, only further decline into the self-will and individualism that the Sophists had inaugurated. Self-assertive hegemony shifts from Sparta to Thebes to Phocis to Macedon, as various powers seek to dominate a landscape and civilization predicated on particularism.¹⁹⁷ The protection of Delphi shifts from the Amphictyonic League to Philip and Alexander, who will thoroughly displace the 'monarchy' of oracular Apollo. As he seals the long decline of the *polis* and leads a Panhellenic war against the Oriental world, Alexander is the final destroyer and champion of Greek civilization: youthful, passionate, beautiful—a second Achilles, doomed to early death and world-historical glory, he united the *oikoumenē* by force, and so looked beyond the graceful Greek world to the more brutal power of Rome.¹⁹⁸

Beautiful, brutal Alexander marks an end and a beginning, and as one of Hegel's world-historical individuals, acted in ways prophetic of events to come. Other Greeks could only respond to the *polis*'s decline in

¹⁹⁵ LH 258.

¹⁹⁶ The opposition of Dorian Sparta and Ionian Athens goes back at least to Herodotus (1.56–8), but in contemporary debates about the Greek *Stämme*, Hegel characteristically takes such 'opposites' to be 'identical', as aspects of the one basic culture (LP 1.322–9, LH 258–71). Elsewhere he differentiates the Greek spirit into three distinctive 'souls'—Spartan, Theban, and Athenian, representing substantial duty, subjective passion, and their beautiful synthesis, respectively (EM §394A with Inwood 2010: 334–5). This last passage essentially informs Rawson's reconstruction of Hegel's Sparta, which she places in opposition to the more positive vision inaugurated by F. Schlegel (1969: 306–44).

¹⁹⁷ Alternating hegemony: LH 256 (Sparta), 264–5 (Athens), 265–6 (Thebans), 271 (Sparta, Phocis).

¹⁹⁸ Decline of the *polis*: the 'decay... of this beautiful life' set in even during the Periclean 'golden age' (LP 1.322), evidenced by the self-assertion of Alcibiades and Critias (LP 1.421, 1.447–8), Aristophanic irreverence (LA 2.1206, 1233–4), Sophistic scepticism and Socratic 'individual reflective morality' (LP 2.9), Diogenes' Cynic alienation from Athens' 'over-refinement' (PR §195A), Demosthenes' appeals to waning patriotism (perhaps alluded to in ETW 164–5), and the merely private themes of New Comedy (LA 2.1206). This is an early version of a traditional narrative, with the specifically Hegelian accent on the advance/decline from *substantial* customs to the *subjective* individuality whose emergence 'wrought the ruin of Greece' (LP 2.109, LH 271).

more anachronistic ways. In a time when 'many Greek states found their constitutions unsatisfactory, and yet could not devise anything new', Plato composed his political works, most notably the *Republic*—the swan-song (in Hegel's reading) to the beautiful cities of Greece. This *Republic* diagnoses the cause of decline correctly—the 'individual reflective morality' of Sophists and Socrates, which ruined the old reverence for custom.¹⁹⁹ But its solution—repressing subjective freedom in order to restore 'Greek morality according to its substantial mode'—was merely reactionary, and would be swept aside by the progress of events. For in this reading, Plato's *kallipolis* tries to exorcise the incipient Socratic conscience by arrogating to itself all resources, talents, and services, 'altogether abolishing' rights to property, family, and free occupation, erecting a near-Oriental caste-system, and governing with unwritten laws and 'noble lies' opaque to the vast majority.²⁰⁰ Thus is each particular will 'dissolved' directly in the universal will of the city, which becomes indeed 'one family'—a spiritually retrograde step.²⁰¹ Yet if the *Republic* commits a great wrong against individual freedom, it is (for Hegel) more fundamentally right in defending the primacy of the communal whole, 'the substantive ethical life in its ideal beauty and truth'. In all, it is one-sided, and finds its complement in the one-sided proponent of modern subjectivity, Rousseau.²⁰²

2.3.2. Lawful Empire

Though it seems reactionary in elevating the general above the particular will, Plato's *Republic* does look ahead to the sharp split that Hegel detects in the *longue durée* of Roman politics.²⁰³ The rift between an all-powerful state

¹⁹⁹ 'Constitutions unsatisfactory': LP 2.8. 'Individual reflective morality': LP 2.98. 'Substantive mode': LP 2.96.

²⁰⁰ Resources, services of individuals: PR §§184A, 299R (Guardians' *corvée*). Full communism of property: §185R, LP 2.110. 'Abolishes marriage' and 'sacred' right of family: LP 2.112. Caste system: LP 2.109ff; PR §§206R (referencing Plato *Republic* 415a-d), 262A. General suppression of subjectivity: PR §§185R, 262A. Noble lies: Frederick the Great is that unspecified, 'great spirit' who in 1780 set a prize essay on the question 'whether it be permitted to deceive a people' (§317R)—but the ultimate inspiration is Plato.

²⁰¹ 'Particularity... dissolved in the universal': LP 2.109. 'One family': LP 2.111.

²⁰² Substantive beauty, truth: PR §185R. Rousseau and Plato: LP 2.115 with De Laurentiis 2003.

²⁰³ The 'infinite personality of the individual', suppressed in Plato's *Republic*, 'dawned in an inward form in the Christian religion and in an external form... in the Roman world (PR §185R).

and an irrepressible conscience (between an Alexander and Socrates, as it were) had begun to emerge in the Greek world—but was original to Rome.²⁰⁴ This political dualism took different forms through Rome's long history: king and subjects, patricians and plebeians, aristocracy and *populus*, emperor and subjects. Hegel seems to classify Rome's early constitution as essentially aristocratic, in Montesquieu's sense: the few ruled over the many, in the spirit of moderation.²⁰⁵ But when contemplating the later Republic and Empire, he stresses force as the bond unifying generals and people, Rome and the provinces; at these times, alienation from state power prompts a deepening of interiority—the ground for Stoicism, Epicureanism, Scepticism, and Christianity. Ultimately, the dualism issues forth in the proto-constitutional monarchy of the Empire, that fostered legal equality and a proto-conscience, within the framework of a vast, alienating, but lawful Leviathan. Aristocratic republic or proto-monarchy: Hegel struggles to name a *single* constitution to express the Roman political spirit in its long evolution. Yet his wider world-historical lens would make Rome the mediating point between the Greek city and medieval-modern monarchy. The correlatives that were loosely united in the Greek *polis*—objective customs, customary patriotism—are under Rome dissociated, held together by mechanical force, allowed to develop independently, and to inch towards a more perfect union: the rational symbiosis of a code-based constitution and a fully awake, Christian conscience.

With duality as its inner core, the trajectory of Roman history follows Hegel's postulated triadic pattern: beginnings (regal period, early Republic), maturity (Punic and other expansionary wars), decline (Empire, Byzantium). Roman history begins with Romulus and Remus, those willful orphans whose 'predatory' band of robbers introduced the elements of Roman universalism: strong rulers attract the most disparate followers, bound not by Oriental patriarchy and racial unity, nor by Greek customs,

²⁰⁴ The dualism that for Hegel 'marks Rome's inmost being' (LH 279) re-emerges in E.M. Wood's assertion that the Roman Empire 'rested on a dual foundation: a strong system of private property and a powerful military force'; and that, more precisely, Roman law 'produced both a distinctive conception of absolute individual property [*dominium*]'—very different from the loose conceptions of possession characteristic, for example, of the ancient Greeks—and also something approaching a notion of sovereignty [*imperium*]—a public right of command attached to civil magistrates and then the emperor—which distinguished Roman ideas of the state from the Greek idea of the *polis* as simply the community of citizens' (in Patriquin 2012: 66). Subjective *dominium* with objective *imperium*, contrasted with a more holistic citizen-*polis*: the framework is recognizably, utterly Hegelian.

²⁰⁵ PR §273R; cf. LH 297 (clarifying Niebuhr's confusion regarding whether the early Roman constitution was a 'democracy' or 'aristocracy').

but by force and fear of the leader. From such a seed, the rest unfolds: the loveless severity of the Roman family; the merely external bonds of power and law that hold city, republic, and empire together; the non-exclusive attitude that would lead to the universal extension of citizenship, and the incipient sense of universal equality before an impersonal law.²⁰⁶ The Conflict of the Orders (interpreted as strife between original patricians and immigrant plebeians) consumed the early Republic, but when these classes were reconciled in the moderately aristocratic constitution of Senate and People, the tension of opposites reconciled gave Rome unprecedented strength. Having subdued Italy, it turned on previous world-historical peoples and conquered 'Oriental' Carthage and the Greek world, while later Caesar crossed the Rhine and brought the first sustained contact with the Germanic tribes destined to succeed Rome in world-historical supremacy. As in Livy and Sallust, empire brought the corruptions of wealth, luxury, and self-interest.²⁰⁷ Moderation waned, the balance between leaders and people was upset, the split between state and individual deepened, and the 'severest form of tyranny or anarchy' was unloosed.²⁰⁸ As he sketches the spirit of the late Republic, Hegel seems to draw indeterminately on the spirit of Tacitus, Juvenal, and Gibbon: alienation, greed, civil war, despair of old pieties, universal depression—an escalation of unhappiness, in which satirical indignation, Stoical indifference, and Sceptical self-sufficiency could provide only so much consolation. All longed for more concrete salvation, and found it: after the veritable Calvary of the late Republic, Augustus and Christ emerged as god-kings to inaugurate a new order. In strictly political terms, it was Julius Caesar who first 'inaugurated the Modern World', and so what Augustus advanced further was not a renewed republic, still less an Oriental tyranny—but a proto-constitutional monarchy with the emperor as 'first citizen' under the law.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ Founding violence (Remus killed, Sabine women), 'predatory state': *LH* 283–6; cf. Plutarch *Numa* 26, the *libido dominandi* of Augustine's Rome, Wengst 1987. Inclusivity regarding citizenship: *LH* 284 (Sabine Women, Demaratus), 316 (Caracalla). Equality of 'social units', with property rights: e.g. 281, 288, 299, 315–7. This characterization of Roman selves (free and slave!) as abstract, equal 'units' takes inspiration from Gibbon's remark that under Roman emperors, 'The minds of men were gradually reduced to the same level' (1994 Chapter 2): see *NL* 148–9 with Villey 1974: 132–3, Bernasconi 1991, Stewart 2018: 271–2.

²⁰⁷ Victories bring immoderation: *LH* 306–7; cf. Sallust *Jugurtha* 41.5, Livy, Preface 10–12. *PR* §273R.

²⁰⁹ Caesar: *LH* 318. Cristi goes further: Hegel's history of the transition from the Republic to Caesarism offers a veiled 'Roman argument', i.e. a critique of modern liberalism for its 'authoritarian potential' (2005: 129–42).

The teleology of both Hegel's Roman history and world-history would thus seem to side with those who regard the Empire as more genuinely 'Roman' than the Republic, in that the Empire brings to full manifestation Rome's essential duality (substantive state, burgeoning subjectivity)—the 'truth' latent in earlier divisions. Yet if Hegel is little interested in the details of the Republic's constitutional struggles, colonies, and wars, still less is he concerned with the external events of the Principate. The depressing annals of imperial intrigue could only embroider the basic fact: the Empire was *not* a time of happiness, but of 'slavery' to an iron, mechanical state.²¹⁰ At the same time, the long Roman peace was permeated with the same spirit as early Christianity: Rome's 'universal principle of justice' was hospitable to an ethos 'by which the individual man, in virtue of his existence, has absolute value as a universal being'.²¹¹ This proto-Christian ethic harbours a deeper integration of particular subject and universal Church, and so Hegel will give over most of his third section of Roman history ('Rome Under the Emperors') to the Christian 'revolution', the most important outcome of the Roman Revolution. Such a reading of Roman history is positively ecclesiastical in focus, and one might trace in it how the basic Roman rift between subject and state evolves into the sharper contrast of spiritual Church and secular Empire—foreshadows of the medieval *sacerdotium* and *imperium*, respectively.²¹² Ultimately, for Hegel, this split would be healed in his own Lutheran accommodation: enlightened conscience and enlightened state mutually recognize each other's separate but interdependent spheres. In this narrative, again, Roman Catholicism never fully liberated the conscience, and so when modern Liberalism 'emanating from France, traversed the Roman world', it proved ineffective in the Roman Catholic

²¹⁰ As if opposing it to its 'cheerful' Greek precedent, Hegel avoids those praises of Roman power (in e.g. Virgil, Pliny, Aelius Aristides) that culminate in Gibbon's verdict that 'the human race was most happy and prosperous' under the Good Emperors (1994: 32, Chapter 3); on these panegyrics, see Wengst 1987: 7–50. From the late 1780s, German constitutional historians such as D.H. Hegewisch (author of *Über die für die Menschheit glücklichste Epoche in der Römischen Geschichte* (1800)) took much inspiration from Gibbon's vision of Antonine Rome, happy because guided by expert jurists: see Whitman 1990: 81–90. More congenial for the Hegelian position are those passages in which Gibbon stands aghast at the 'slavery of the Romans' in 'that unhappy period' under 'monsters' from Tiberius to Domitian, whose seemingly unlimited power rendered the Romans' 'condition more completely wretched than that of the victims of tyranny in any other age or country' (1994: 33, Chapter 3; cf. Chapter 9).

²¹¹ *LP* 2.375.

²¹² *Imperium, sacerdotium*: 'Rome Under the Emperors' (*LH* 314–35) has 'two essential aspects, the secular and the spiritual'. Christian 'revolution': *LP* 2.374. Ecclesiastical focus: historians like Eusebius tend to include 'virtually no events', apart from persecutions and martyrdoms, between the Incarnation and Constantine (Burrow 2009: 191).

lands, the 'Romanic nations' of Spain, Portugal, and Italy, thus proving that there can be no 'Revolution without a Reformation'.²¹³

Such remarks draw lines from modern individualism directly back to the dawning of political subjectivity—in the Roman world with its abstract 'social units'. The juxtaposition of 'Germanic' modernity with Roman antiquity is not uncharacteristic. For Hegel as for Gibbon, the Byzantine Empire was the Roman Empire in its long decline, and its final 'fall' with the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 immediately precedes Columbus's explorations and Luther's self-exploration: Rome ends, modernity begins. As heir to the manifold legacy of the ancient Mediterranean, the modern era is for Hegel a time of concrete unification—of the state internally, of the globe economically, of the individual mind spiritually. In this task of total integration, Hegel's *PR* and *LH* are to play their part, together demonstrating how past constitutions groped towards their truth in the modern monarchy, and therefore mixed insights and errors that only the modern mind can sift. Hegel does not quite sift through all evidence systematically. Nevertheless, the scattered hints and half-developed 'moments of antiquity' in *PR* and *LH* suggest that his overall historico-political vision is a consistent one. His patriotic Greeks and Romans love their respective states as their highest objective 'Good', but their limited grasp of freedom entailed many errors: slavery, scorn for luxury and trade, fear of individual liberty, lack of civil society, and customs or law codes that were not recognizably identical with natural law and reason. In both cultures, only 'some were free'—or, more accurately, only some were *partially* free: shadows of an ideality, the beautiful Greek city and lawful Roman empire were free, but not free enough. Yet both left positive legacies now on the cusp of actualization in the 'true' state, as it comprises Greek-like republican participation (juries, assemblies, patriotism) and Roman-like order (abstract right, enlightened conscience, monarchy). Formulaically, the aesthetic democracy of the Greeks and the lawful empire of the Romans come together in the rational modern state—the true 'utopia' as it balances private freedoms and public duties aright, reconciling particular and universal wills far more satisfactorily than lovely Greek customs or iron Roman legalism could. Such ideas would make Hegel's modern state very much the heir of Athena's *polis* and 'goddess' *Roma*, of Plato's *kallipolis* and Rome's Leviathan: the true political

²¹³ *LH* 452–3.

absolute and 'mortal god' that holds its members rightly in awe, as the objective correlative of their own absolute freedom.

2.4. The World-Spirit and its Own: Who Owns Ancient Art?

If the formula 'beautiful city, lawful empire, rational state', is a fair summing up of Hegel's reworking of 'Greek' *Sittlichkeit* with 'Roman' subjectivity, then it would reflect the unbounded ambition of the modern mind and state to understand and appropriate *everything* as part of itself. This appropriation is not intellectual only but extends from universities and schools to churches and museums. Each of these organs of spiritual education has a material basis—in property—and so circles us back to Hegel's first category of the will, and the controversial question: Who owns the past? More particularly, who owns the fragmentary remnants of the Greek and Roman artistic pasts?

The question is for Hegel at once legal, historical, artistic, and spiritual. Art-works have a material basis, but are yet not mere things:²¹⁴ not created by acts of *sheer* will, neither can they be so appropriated. And yet, like things, art-works become possessions to the degree that the subject somehow 'invests' his will in them or makes them extensions of his being.

The will must be continually invested in a thing for it to remain private property: hence total use is ownership, and lack of use leads to loss of the thing through prescription . . . Deprived of this soul they [national monuments, art-works] are, so far as the nation is concerned, without a master, and become casually a private possession, as has happened with the Greek and Egyptian works of art in Turkey.²¹⁵

'Casual private possessions' might well describe the plunder that Marcellus carried away from Syracuse, or Mummius from Corinth, or Sulla from Athens—or even Napoleon from Italy. It is true that in his world-historical version of the *translatio imperii* from Greek to Roman to Germanic victors, Hegel will justify each dominant power as the special vehicle of the Spirit: therefore, 'against this absolute will the other particular natural minds have no rights: that nation dominates the world'.²¹⁶ Nevertheless, Hegel does not defend brute plundering. The principle 'to the victor go the spoils' describes

²¹⁴ Cf. PR §43A.

²¹⁵ PR §64R (tr. Dyde).

²¹⁶ EM §550.

only the triumph of external force, and does not in fact allow the victor to possess art as *art*, i.e. as material things pervaded with spirit. Hence, his 'prosaic' Romans never truly possessed the Greek artistic riches that they hauled off, plagiarized, or extorted from their Greek artisan-slaves.²¹⁷ Nor do the latter-day inhabitants of Turkey, Greece, or Italy, dwelling with languid indifference among the glorious ruins of the past.²¹⁸ By contrast, the modern will to preserve, imitate, and understand ancient art is abundantly evident in the labours of a Winckelmann or Goethe; in the great museums and neo-classical buildings of Paris, London, Berlin; and in the establishment of university chairs dedicated to understanding the past. Hegel would suggest that this expansive energy animating northern Europeans to a second revival of antiquity amounts to a rebirth of the same spirit that moved the Greeks, and so gives their 'Germanic' successors the right—and perhaps the duty?—to appropriate the statues, mosaics, and monuments that the ancients left behind: through prescription, the masterpieces of a Pheidias belong now to humanity at large, or at least to that portion of it with the spiritual capacity to appreciate them again as masterpieces.

A whole philosophy of history thus lies behind Hegel's defence of Lord Elgin's removal of the Parthenon sculptures and frieze (1801–12): far from perpetrating a 'sacrilege', Lord Elgin saved the works 'from complete destruction' and so 'his enterprise deserves recognition for all time'.²¹⁹ Far from being a casual plunderer, a collector like Elgin becomes a tool of the World-Spirit as it appropriates anew *its own* past products. 'The right of the world-spirit . . . is absolute without qualification.'²²⁰ If so, Hegel would seem to defend the *unlimited* rights of appropriation by modern states and their representatives: a contentious argument that continues to attract its share of supporters, and critics.

²¹⁷ LH 312. A similar approach is explored through the metaphor of 'cargo' in Loar, MacDonald, and Peralta 2018.

²¹⁸ Hegel's thoughts on the decline of the southern peoples may take inspiration from Gibbon's sketch of modern Italy languishing under 'the lazy tyranny of priests and viceroys', of Spain which 'flourished as a province, and has declined as a kingdom', and of eastern Mediterranean lands that everywhere 'present the contrast of Roman magnificence with Turkish barbarism' (1994: 20, Chapter 2). But even before he studied Gibbon in detail, Hegel's valedictory address (*Abiturrede*) to the Stuttgart Gymnasium (1788) contrasts Germans with Turks, bereft now of art and *Bildung* alike (cf. Pinkard 2000: 16).

²¹⁹ LA 2.724; cf. LR 2.546 (1827) on Belzoni. Schiller's 'Antiques at Paris' expresses similar sentiments: the 'Frank' may fill his museums by the Seine, but 'Der allein besitzt die Musen, / Der sie trägt im warmen Busen, / Dem Vandalen sind sie Stein'. On the question, 'Who owns antiquity?' cf. Cuno 2011.

²²⁰ PR §30R.

3

Art

3.1. Art, Arts, and the Classical Ideal

The will to power is not necessarily a will to beauty, but it remains a striking fact that the revolutionary will of the Napoleonic years coincided with an astonishing surge in artistic energy. Beethoven, Wordsworth, Turner had their own Bastilles to storm, and though it is perhaps too simple to assert that Romantic genius overturned neoclassical rules, it is true that the early nineteenth century saw the rise of a veritable cult of creative imagination, with the artist revered as prophet, legislator, creator of worlds, maker of new gods, even saviour of mankind. Figures like Hölderlin, Byron, and Beethoven inspired mythologies of their own, and in German-speaking lands aspirations for an ‘art of the future’ stretch from Winckelmann to Wagner. It was as if some primordial energy were breaking through, and art replacing religion (at least among the ‘faithful’) as the most significant source of meaning. At the same time, and more mundanely, this new faith was financed by the new civil society. Changing spiritual demand created a supply of new suppliers, and to the growing middle classes, artists could hawk their aesthetic wares—no longer servants of haughty aristocrats, or nameless craftsmen of a tradition. To paraphrase Gibbon, art was elevated to a religion, and degraded to a trade: Paganini, Liszt, or Wagner might be regarded as mortal gods or as sublime entertainers—and behind the creed of creativity was the ‘god’ of the market. And yet, let not the cynic have the final word. A list of names serves like a litany of saints, and testifies to the wondrous artistic creativity of Hegel’s time.¹ Thorvaldsen, Turner, Beethoven, Hölderlin, Wordsworth, and Coleridge were almost exact contemporaries, and while Washington DC was rising up as a new Rome on the

¹ Notable near contemporaries in *sculpture* include the neoclassicists Canova and Thorvaldsen. *Painting*: Goya, David, Turner, Constable, Delacroix, Gericault, Ingres, Caspar Friedrich David. *Music*: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Boccherini, Cherubini, Paganini, Schubert, Mendelssohn, von Weber. *Literature*: Goethe, Schiller, Novalis, August and Friedrich Schlegel, Hölderlin, Walter Scott, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Byron, Jane Austen, Stendhal, Balzac, Hugo, Pushkin.

Potomac, Schinkel's Berlin was rising up as the 'Athens on the Spree' and Klenze's neoclassical Munich would become known as 'Athens on the Isar'.

Thus classical models remained authoritative even amid the surge of artistic novelty. This is emphatically true of Hegel also. His *Lectures on Fine Art* contain such theoretical and empirical riches that he has been called the real 'father of art history'.² Yet solidly at their centre and haunting their peripheries is 'the classical Ideal'. Hegel's near reverence for classical beauty pervades his thinking on art, both generically and specifically: it defines his conceived Ideal of artistic beauty, shapes his 'logical' system of the arts, and colours his interpretation of individual arts, art-works, and artists even when they seem ostensibly distant from classical antiquity. Greek art's focus on the 'human form divine' is taken over wholesale and generalized by Hegel, and such is his reverence for Greek sculpture and poetry in particular that later triumphs are often only after-echoes of the Greek: such will be my theme and thesis.

The classical Ideal is prominent, first of all, in the 'logical' organization of *LA* as a whole. As can be gleaned from its table of contents, the universal concept of Beauty evolves itself into particular forms or styles (Symbolic, Classical, Romantic) and differentiates itself further in the 'historical system of the individual arts' (architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry). Heading it all is the concept of Beauty, or 'the Ideal'—the necessary sensuous manifestation of the Idea. The very term 'Ideal' immediately invokes Winckelmann and Kant, and behind the logical periphrasis may be detected an aesthetic that mingles Winckelmannian enthusiasm with Kantian 'disinterested' spontaneity³—and the Plotinian One: an art-work is beautiful for Hegel to the degree that it evokes feelings of the unified, self-related totality. This *feeling of unity* evoked by beautiful art operates on several levels: it is firstly the unity of reality itself—the unity of thinking and being, Concept and Nature, in a charged sensuous form, and this evoked unity lends art the same 'divine' content as religion and philosophy; there is, in addition, the

² 'Father of art history': Gombrich 1984: 51–69, Bubner 2003: 238; Podro places him at the head of his series of 'critical historians of art' (1984: 17–30); Hammermeister attributes to him 'a veritable world history of art' (2002: 24); Squire argues for Hegel's importance to the past and present discipline of art history, including classical art history (2018). Hegel lectured on art five times, in 1818 (Heidelberg), 1820–1, 1823, 1826, 1828–9 (Berlin): see Donelan 2008: 68–9. The published *LA* were compiled by Hotho from notes of Hegel and his students from the last three sets of lectures. Moland's critical commentary on *LA* (2019) appeared while this book was already in press, and I have unfortunately not been able to refer to her work adequately.

³ Inner affinities between Winckelmann and Kant is the theme of Prettejohn 2005: 15–54—illuminating background for Hegel's aesthetic.

unity of beautiful object and contemplating subject—that mood of spontaneous rapture when one is caught up in the beautiful other, and through it into a reality yet greater; finally, there is the unity of the art-work itself, both as a whole, and in its smallest parts. Individual art-works evoke the totality in this way because they share its intelligible structure: some guiding *universal* (mood, theme, idea) is, through the artist's shaping of a sensuous medium, differentiated into a range of *particular* details, each of which is so skilfully handled that they resonate with all others as *individual* reflections of the universal permeating them. This UPI structure reveals how in the art-work, the *natural* is *spiritualized*. More vividly, the art-work is 'Argus-eyed', after the mythical Greek watcher with eyes all over his body. The eye is the window of the soul, which is the place of forms, and so in the 'Argus-eyed' art-work, 'the inner soul and spirit is seen at every point'. Each part glows with 'all-pervasive vitality': *every* curve, note or phrase evokes every other and the whole, thereby opening one into the 'Idea' and timeless heart of things. This is a complex aesthetic that can be understood from many angles—an extension of Leibnizian monadology, for instance, or of Polyclitus' canon.⁴ But its most immediate context is Winckelmann and his praise of the Belvedere statues: 'in every part of this body [*Belvedere Apollo*] there is revealed . . . the complete hero in a specific deed'.⁵ For Hegel as for Winckelmann, the Argus-eyed nature of art ensures *that* even fragmentary art remains art: the whole shines through the broken parts, and can be seen and reconstructed by 'practised art-scholars'.⁶

⁴ Polyclitus' canon placed 'everything in relation to everything', in Galen's view: see Squire's discussion of the long-hallowed Polyclitan 'idea of the ideal' (2011: 8–16). More generally, the Pythagorean aesthetic canon (Eco 2005: 61–97 gives a survey) is modified by Hegel: symmetry, proportion, harmony lend *some* beauty to natural things in that they 'foreshadow' the Concept (LA 1.129); most important to architecture (following Vitruvius 3.1), their role diminishes as art 'progresses' towards less material media. Namely, the idea of Beauty is not a mathematical one accessible to *Verstand*, but is the unity-in-difference grasped by *Vernunft*; logically, it is not fathomed by 'measure' (a category of Being) but by 'life', the truth of Nature and first category of the Idea. Hegel's subordination of mathematical form to higher, spiritual unities is in the tradition of Plato's *Timaeus* (see esp. Plotinus 1.6, 6.7.22). It also follows Winckelmann: it is not the circle ('just a curved line of little interest' (LA 1.139)) that is the most beautiful shape, but the oval or ellipse (2.737), for it 'is not in the power of Algebra to determine which line, more or less elliptic, forms the divers parts of the system into beauty—but the ancients knew it; I attest their works, from the gods down to their vases' (Winckelmann 1986 [1755]: 259).

⁵ Winckelmann: 2013: 145. Some Hegelian passages: LA 1.153–4 ('Spirit seen at every point'), 1.124–8 (sculpture), 1.173 ('all-pervasive vitality'), 2.846 (carnation in painting). The image of Argus recurs in Rilke's 'Apollo's Archaic Torso', a poem that Hoeckner reads as a 'comment of sorts' on Hegel's '*aesthetics of Argusness*' (2002: 14–15; cf. Hatfield 1964: 19–20).

⁶ LA 2.760; cf. 2.725–6 and 1.127 (*ex ungue leonem*). Such remarks extend the Enlightenment trope that the classical architectural orders are so mathematically regular that from the diameter

As the beautiful Ideal differentiates itself into diverse artistic styles (Symbolic, Classical, Romantic), only 'the Classical' is truly adequate to it aesthetically, for only this achieves a thorough unity of form and matter—i.e. sensuous appearance and the inner Idea. *Symbolic* art, by contrast, gropes uncertainly and sublimely towards the Idea so that it can only gesture towards it abstractly or allegorically, expressing its infinity as a chaotic profusion of shapes or as a sublime beyond. Symbolic art tends to occur early, in both national traditions, and in the Oriental beginnings of art's world-history.⁷ It evolves towards its *telos* in the Classical style that occurs not only in Classical Greece but at the peak of an artistic tradition, hovering in the 'beautiful middle' between Symbolic allegory and Romantic subjectivity. Finally then, the *Romantic* artist is most fully aware that the Idea's spiritual infinity cannot be wholly captured in finite, physical forms. He yearns to say the aesthetically unsayable, seeks out an ever broader range of contents while becoming ever more self-conscious of their limits, and so in *Sehnsucht* and irony, his art begins to border on the universality and self-reflexivity of philosophical thinking.⁸

A final evolution of the Ideal brings it into the 'historical system of the individual arts'. Here Hegel adds his own flourishes to the emerging genre of such systems:⁹ Symbolic art is best represented in architecture, Classical in sculpture, and Romantic in painting, music, and poetry. The schema is not

of a fragmentary column-drum, say, one could calculate column height, intercolumnar distances, and so forth.

⁷ Sublimity of the Symbolic: W.J. Desmond, 1986: 201–17, Guyer 2012.

⁸ Hegel clearly viewed his logical 'deductions' of the Ideal (into its Symbolic, Classical, and Romantic varieties) as the definitive cap on contemporary discussions, which revolved around the Classical–Romantic axis. The polarity has roots in Schiller's distinction of 'naïve' (i.e. Greek) and 'sentimental' (i.e. modern) poetry (*Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (1795)), as well as the similar distinction of 'Classical' and 'Romantic' in F. Schlegel's *Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie* (1797), and A. Schlegel's *Vorlesungen zur Geschichte der klassischen und romantischen Literatur* (1802). A preoccupation with subject–object and matter–form dichotomies makes Hegel's understanding of the 'Classical' and 'Romantic' somewhat more involved than typical associations of the Classical with moderation, calm, simplicity, and beauty and the Romantic with exuberance, emotion, irrationality, and sublimity (on which see Ashmole 1964, Scully 1957–8). Moreover, he adds the Symbolic as a third point of reference, with much inspiration from Creuzer (Gadamer 1971: 71–80; cf. Barasch 1990: 178–92, Bubner 2003: 246–54).

⁹ Horace's *Ars Poetica* 'was perhaps the first to arrange the several arts in anything like order' (Knight 1891: 39). Perhaps inspired by Simonides' alleged saying ('painting is silent poetry and poetry painting that speaks'), his '*ut pictura poesis*' certainly stimulated further comparisons of the arts, particularly in Germany where Kant, Schelling, Solger, Schleiermacher, Schopenhauer, and others developed their own systematic organizations of the various arts: see Kristeller 1951–2.

applied rigidly, for aesthetic categories blend into hybrid forms, such as Romantic architecture (e.g. Gothic cathedral) or Symbolic poetry (the Psalms). And yet, a dominant leitmotif is that each historical people had its own characteristic art, and vice versa: each of the three styles, and five arts, flourished most among *one* historical people, whose spirit was best expressed through those modes and media.

Each art has its time of efflorescence, of its perfect development as an art, and a history preceding and following this moment of perfection. . . . [Each art has] a beginning, a progress, a perfection, and an end, a growth, blossoming, and decay. (LA 2.614)

More precisely, each art-form develops through three successive styles ('the severe, ideal, and pleasing style') before dissipating its substance in subjectivity—the rococo-style effects that thrill the audience with proof of the artist's virtuosity.¹⁰ Readers of Winckelmann might immediately recognize the traces of his periodization of Greek art into (1) the archaic; (2) the severe, lofty, or grand; (3) the beautiful or graceful; and (4) the later 'degenerate' works. But where Winckelmann explores Greek art as exemplary of all art-histories, Hegel applies it even more systematically, across genres and historical epochs: *generically*, each art-form (e.g. painting, poetry) develops from archaic beginnings through 'classical' loftiness or beauty to a final 'romantic' over-refinement; *world-historically*, the sublime strivings of Oriental architecture yield to the ideal beauty of Classical Greek sculpture, and on down to the rich subjective expressionism of the 'Romantic' (i.e. Christian) art of medieval and modern 'Germanic' Europe; *phenomenologically*, this art-historical trajectory reflects, and contributes to, the millennial evolution from 'substance to subject', as the massy Pyramids give way to the softer marbles of Praxiteles, artistic media becoming ever more humanized until they find their *telos* in the complex personalities of Romantic drama.

In keeping with the synthetic task of modern philosophy, Hegel seeks to unify all past theories of art, and all past art-works, into a single logico-historical whole—in which each aesthetic phenomenon gets its proper place, at once uniquely differentiated *and* related to all others, so that in the deepest sense it becomes 'identical' with them. This fusion of difference

¹⁰ See LA 2.613–20. 'Severe, ideal, and pleasing style': 2.615.

and identity is bound up with Hegel's definition of the Ideal as the manifestation of the self-differentiating Idea. To unravel this somewhat severe abstraction would take us through his remarkable dialectical synopsis of previous aesthetic theories, from Plato's Idea of Beauty and Aristotle's *Poetics* down to Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, Schiller, and the Romantics. Art has been regarded as the product of rule-based craft, or of unpredictable genius;¹¹ it imitates nature and objective realities, or expresses and stimulates subjective emotion; it purifies and purges inner passions and so civilizes the heart; it captures all phenomena and human experiences, and by doing so elevates the human spirit above the merely natural, becomes a vehicle for moral self-awareness, and so has been an education for whole peoples.¹² Ultimately, for Hegel, these partial insights are summed up in his own formulae: art-works express in sensuous media the deepest experiences and beliefs of an artist and people; they thus exhibit what could be called an aesthetic thinking, expressing the 'spirit' of a people and its artists; indeed, in expressing themselves and contemplating themselves through their artistic products, a people gains a self-consciousness that is a mode of the deeper Self-Thinking by which Hegel understands 'God'. In short, art in its highest vocation is 'the sensual presentation (*Darstellung*) of the Absolute itself'.¹³

In simpler terms, great art is at its core always religious. Art only fulfils its supreme task when it has placed itself in the same sphere as religion and philosophy, and when it is simply one way of bringing to our minds and expressing the *Divine*, the deepest interests of mankind, and the most comprehensive truths of the spirit.¹⁴

¹¹ Art as rule-based craft: Aristotle's *Poetics*, Horace's *Ars Poetica* and [Longinus'] *On the Sublime* provide 'prescriptions' from 'art-doctors' trying to rejuvenate poetry in times of decadence; these (and their modern equivalents by Home, Batteux, Rammler) are based on a 'very restricted range of material', though Aristotle's 'theory of tragedy is even now of interest' because of his speculative insight; more typical is Horace's *Ars Poetica*—utterly 'vapid' in its generalizing maxims (*LA* 1.15–16).

¹² Art, 'first instructress of peoples': *LA* 1.50. Hegel singles out poetry as 'the most universal and widespread teacher of the human race' (2.972), a proposition widely shared in antiquity: see Snell 1953: 113–35, P. Murray 1996: 17–24. Jaeger goes further to call Homer 'the teacher of all humanity' (1945: I.39), and for M. Finley too, the religious 'revolution' represented by Homeric anthropomorphism allowed man 'to know himself' (1954: 164).

¹³ *LA* 1.70.

¹⁴ *LA* 1.7; cf. 1.175 ('Art has above all to make the Divine the centre of its representations').

The divine, deepest interests, comprehensive truths: while Hegel's statement is rightfully attuned to the religious intensity of much great work of the past, his terminology is broad enough to encompass even the seemingly secular. Indeed, he may well make 'divine' mankind the true centre of art, for in his monistic vision, the Idea particularizes itself into various cycles of artistic 'divinities' and their deeds. This 'determinacy of the Ideal'¹⁵ is primarily evident in the Greek pantheon of gods and heroes, each of which is self-sufficient, unperturbed by external relations, self-aware, seemingly capable of anything, and serene in its 'self-enjoyment': a veritable refraction of the divine life itself. Other cycles include Christ and the Apostles, 'saints, martyrs, and holy men' who continued His ministry; the even wider 'class of princes' and aristocrats who enjoyed extraordinary freedom and power in more heroic times; and, even more diffusely still, the array of ethical 'powers' and passions (*pathē*) that move the heart, form a people's sacred memories, animate their most important experiences and so shape their deepest ideas about reality and themselves, and are the 'proper centre, the true domain, of art'.¹⁶ Greek Gods, Christian saints, heroes, ethical *pathē*, and the situations and actions that proceed from them—all these become facets of the divine Idea, that can even be styled 'children' and 'sons' of the Ideal.

Such a formulation highlights an ambivalence, or rich complexity, in Hegel's understanding of the 'religious' content of art. In his system, of course, there is no insuperable gap between God and Man. The human organism is the most complete form of organic nature, its 'truth', as it were, and only the human body, face, gestures, and expressive movements can reveal and house the free, self-conscious mind.¹⁷ Only human beings can

¹⁵ LA 1.174–279.

¹⁶ LA 1.232. Greek gods, Christ, 'saints, martyrs, holy and pious men', and 'every deeper interest in the soul': e.g. LA 1.176. Princes: e.g. 1.192. 'Powers' and *pathē*: the 'universal, eternal powers of spiritual existence... are the great themes of art, the eternal religious and ethical relationships; family, country, state, church, fame, friendship, class, dignity, and, in the romantic world, especially honour and love, etc' (1.220); cf. 1.232. Pure evil is not one of these powers: the devil is 'aesthetically impracticable' (1.221–2; cf. 1.243). On the other hand, as an expression of the Absolute, which includes a moment of inner negativity, the art-work integrates and redeems or 'idealizes' ugliness, suffering, conflict, war, death. Thus Hegel reworks remarks by Aristotle that we enjoy *representations* of the painful (*Poetics* 1448b10–19), because artistic *mimēsis* satisfies the human desire to know; and by Kant for whom 'fine art evidences its superiority... in the beautiful descriptions it gives of things that in nature would be ugly or displeasing' (1994a: §48).

¹⁷ See LA 2.727–42 ('The Greek Profile' and 'Position and Movement of the Body'). Human body pinnacle of nature: for Sulzer, the 'most beautiful of all visible objects' (*Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*); for Goethe, the 'alpha and omega of all known things... the *non plus ultra* of all human knowledge and activity' (*Italianische Reise*, Rome, 23 August 1787). Analogous ideas lurk in the ancient notion of man as microcosm: e.g. in Plato's *Timaeus*, the human body

represent themselves, and in their *aesthetic* self-contemplation they raise themselves to a mood of union that is akin to the divine self-awareness and bliss. There is an element of Romantic rapture here, but in his preference for the 'Classical', Hegel also effectively adapts the Greek tradition of anthropomorphic art. That the human form divine is the proper locus of art is a commonplace extending from the Renaissance to Winckelmann, and one largely inspired by Greek art.¹⁸ When Hegel picks up the idea, he generalizes it and seeks out its particular manifestations. It is not only Classical sculpture that is the 'miracle of Spirit's giving itself an image of itself in something purely material'.¹⁹ The anthropocentric Ideal also underlies his verdicts on painting, music, and poetry: the colour of human flesh and the timbre of the human voice synthesize the potentialities of colour and sound, respectively, and are therefore the culminating glories of painting and music; in the 'sculptural' character of drama, a 'whole human being comes on stage, fully alive... an animated work of art'.²⁰ And in the *longue durée*, historical art forms *must* end up with the quasi-divinization of man. Romantic art takes to a conclusion the anthropic focus of the Classical, as it makes

Humanus its new holy of holies (*Humanus heist der Heilige*): i.e. the depths and heights of the human heart as such, the universally human in its joys and sorrows, its strivings, deeds, and fates. Herewith the artist acquires his subject-matter in himself and is the human spirit actually self-determining and considering, meditating, and expressing the infinity of its feelings and situations: nothing that can be *living in the human breast is alien to that spirit* any more.²¹

Humanus sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto: Hegel adapts Terence's tag to illustrate the nature of Romantic art, but the passage draws also on his larger thesis, that art takes *all* possible human experience under its purview

comes first, with declinations into animal, bird, and fish bodies (42b, 91a); for Aristotle, 'the nature of man is the most rounded off and complete' (*History of Animals* 9.1, 608b).

¹⁸ Squire's remarkable study reveals its Hegelian thesis towards the end: 'the history of art was a history of artistic epiphany—of trying to express the super-sensory in sensory form', notably through Greco-Roman 'art of the body' (2011: 198); and 'what the *Lectures on Aesthetics* so magisterially convey is the centrality of Graeco-Roman art in directing the *entire* course of western art' (200).

¹⁹ LA 2.710.

²⁰ 'Carnation' as the 'perfect' flesh colour: LA 2.846–7, 2.922. Human voice as 'ideal totality of sound': 2.922. Dramatic character: 2.955.

²¹ LA 1.607 (italics added); cf. Donougho 1982.

and spiritualizes it. The history of art would illustrate this thesis, and so to this we now turn, with ‘continual references’ to the classical Ideal that is never far from Hegel’s mind.

3.2. System of the Individual Arts: Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Music, Poetry

3.2.1. Architecture

Hegel’s time was one of ambitious architectural neoclassicism that sought to reproduce the beauty or grandeur of the ancient world in the modern—not least in Berlin, which saw the construction of the Königliches Museum, the Propylaea-style Brandenburg Gate, and other monuments of the Prussian ‘Greek Revival’. Here Aloys Hirt (first professor of art history in the University of Berlin) initiated fierce debates about the classical legacy and how it should be received: Hübsch’s *In What Style Should We Build?* (1828) fostered the growing recognition of many possible neoclassical styles.²² Hegel’s architectural concerns are more purely historical, and when he looks back to antiquity it is in the Oriental world, as mediated through the Bible and Herodotus, that he discovers architecture’s heyday—ambiguously so, if in fact he prefers the architectural beauty of the Greek temple.

As with all the arts, architecture’s ‘vocation’ is to shape the natural into something spiritually significant for its human makers. Yet because it is most tied to materiality and gravity, it tends to be the least free art-form: buildings are rarely ends in themselves. Nevertheless, Hegel does detect a free architecture in the ‘symbolic’ buildings of the Oriental world. ‘The holy is what links many souls together’: Goethe’s maxim serves almost as Hegel’s ‘guiding thread’ through a veritable chaos of historical material from Indian pagodas to Egyptian pyramids. Namely, Oriental peoples were characteristically united in the construction and contemplation of buildings that served no obvious function, but did embody their deepest insights and were therefore effectively revered as themselves holy things. More specifically, Genesis’s Tower of Babel, Herodotus’ Tower of Bel, the cosmic city of Ecbatana, and monuments of Herodotus’ Sesostriis, were not merely ‘architectural works built for national unification’: more, they were holy buildings

²² On contemporary architectural debates, see Sheehan 2000: 54–5, 79–80, Kultermann 1993: 145, Lohmann 2013, and Saure 2013.

embodying the spiritual energy of their builders.²³ If so, he omits to mention more ready examples, like the Temple of Solomon, which in 1 Kings 6:13–18 becomes the great project for national unification; or the buildings of Pericles' Acropolis which were in Plutarch's assessment both products of the city's collective labour and a revelation of divinity, 'as if some ever-flowering life and unaging spirit had been infused into the creation of them'.²⁴

As holy presences with an inner relation to their builders, such structures somewhat resemble sculptures in Hegel's mind, and the analogy becomes stronger as he struggles to categorize free-standing columns, obelisks, Memnons, Sphinxes as forms intermediate between architecture and sculpture. The placement of these in regular rows, along avenues and in courtyards, makes them in the end more architectural than sculptural: in Hegel's strained categorization, they become the *particular* parts of Egyptian temple-complexes and labyrinths which proliferate therefore more as 'collections of sculptures'²⁵ than as organic wholes. Like Babel and Ecbatana, they serve no determinate ritual purpose, as if they were 'designed' solely to express and arouse a vague wonder: well may Herodotus have been filled with an 'infinite amazement' as he wandered through the labyrinth near Moeris, encountering avenues, halls, courtyards, colonnades—but no cult statue. The religiosity pervading such buildings is thus not that which created the beautiful Athenian Parthenon, or the practical Roman Pantheon: his Egyptians 'piled up on high [their religious buildings] in the same instinctive way in which bees build up their cells'. What drove them on so relentlessly was their own inchoate intuition of the Spirit whose infinity they could capture only in ever more massive monuments.²⁶ In this regard, the Pyramids mark an advance, not because they are more massive, but because they serve a definite purpose. As houses for the dead, and

²³ Architecture's 'vocation': *LA* 2.633. 'Guiding thread': 2.629, 2.632 with 2.638 (Goethe) and 2.635–7. Babel, Bel, Ecbatana: 2.638–41. Sesostri: Herodotus 2.108, *LA* 2.646. Monumental building must have been the Egyptians' main occupation, a 'cult in which King and people are united': 2.646. Of related interest is Wittfogel's theory of 'hydraulic civilizations' (1957), stressing the national unification achieved through monumental building; cf. Winfield 2000: 109 n.17.

²⁴ Plutarch *Pericles* 12–13 (tr. Pollitt 1972: 66). In *LH*, however, Hegel does liken the Parthenon (Athena's 'temple-citadel at Athens') to St Peter's Basilica ('chef-d'œuvre of Christian fabrics'), funded by the allies' money and Christendom's contributions, respectively: products of the collective labour of an age (414).

²⁵ *LA* 2.644.

²⁶ *LA* 2.646–7 (infinite amazement, bee-cells, Spirit); cf. *LH* 214 (Egyptian spirit restlessly 'working out its thoughts in stone').

expressions of Egyptian intimations of immortality, they and the mausoleums become 'the earliest temples' and look forward (in Hegel's mind at least) to the Greek temple: where the Pyramids house a dead king under huge, monolithic 'crystals', the Greek temples house a 'living' god under harmonious, organic forms, articulated beautifully into columns, architraves, and pediments.²⁷ Thus *substantial* Egyptian architecture looks forward to Greek art's sharper focus on the anthropomorphic *subject*.

As he turns to Greek and Roman architecture, Hegel stands on somewhat surer ground, with Hirt and Vitruvius as guides to details of orders, canonical ratios, fluting, *entasis*, and so forth. He implicitly accepts Vitruvius' focus on the temple as the most important Greek architectural form: the temple that in origin, etymology, and essence was a *naos* or 'house' for the 'blessed statue' of the god. Here the functional Greek temple, despite having a merely dependent beauty, in fact thereby progresses beyond Oriental works: it fulfils architecture's essential vocation of transforming natural space into an 'enclosure' for further spiritual revelation. A *temenos* is cut out of the wilderness, and within it emerges the temple, an articulated unity that *is* beautiful: Hegel expends much effort to suggest how the Concept is evident in the way columns, walls, roof, and entablature support each other, and in the way that ratios deviate from strict regularity to achieve a more organic feel. A self-supporting whole delineating a sacred space for the cult image, the Greek temple has indeed a different aura from both Egyptian temple-complexes and Gothic cathedrals. In the former, labyrinthine courts and forests of columns overawe the individual with a sense of the infinity of the Spirit that built them. The latter soar more restlessly above finite existence yet also bring attention to rest on the high altar where the Eucharist is celebrated. The Greek temple also brings a people together to worship at an altar, yet that altar is *outside* and does not concentrate the congregation's gaze on a single perspective point: it unites the congregation only loosely, fosters no deep interiority, and in its earthbound plane lacks the 'upward emphasis'.²⁸ Mediating between symbolic and Romantic sublimities, between Oriental pantheism and trinitarian Christianity, the Greek temple captures the spirit of Hegel's Greeks in all their cheerful, relaxed, outdoor, and democratic existence:

²⁷ As prelude to the Pyramids, Hegel notes how 'cemeteries, tombstones, and the cult of the dead unite men', with reference to Christian catacombs, monuments of Hadrian and Mausolus, Mithras caves, and the tombs of Scythian nomads, with Herodotus 4.126–7 quoted to seal the point (LA 2.651).

²⁸ LA 2.674.

In these prostyles and amphiprostyles, i.e. these single and double colonnades, which led directly to the open air, we see people wandering freely and openly, individually or in accidental groupings; for the colonnades as such enclose nothing but are the boundaries of open thoroughfares, so that people walking in them are half indoors and half outside and at least can always step directly into the open air. In the same way the long walls behind the columns do not admit of any thronging to a central point to which the eye could turn when the passages were crowded; on the contrary, the eye is more likely to be turned away from such a central point in every direction. Instead of having an idea of an assembly with a single aim, we see a drift outwards and get only the idea of people staying there cheerfully, without serious purpose, idly, and just chatting. Inside the enclosure a deeper seriousness may be surmised, but even here we find a precinct more or less (or entirely, especially in the most perfectly developed buildings) open to the external surroundings, which hints at the fact that this seriousness is not meant so very strictly. After all, the impression made by these temples is of simplicity and grandeur, but at the same time of cheerfulness, openness, and comfort, because the whole building is constructed for standing about in or strolling up and down in or coming and going rather than for assembling a collection of people and concentrating them there, shut in on every side and separated from the outside world.²⁹

With a bow to the 'simplicity and grandeur' of Winckelmann, the whole passage is also remarkably consistent with Hegel's own vision of aesthetic, democratic Greeks: the open spaces and lack of a single, controlling centre allow individuals or 'accidental' groups to wander about, undisciplined by any priestly hierarchy or ritual schedule, carefree and yet also somewhat aimless. They seem clearly at home here, untroubled by Gothic pensiveness, their cheerfulness reflecting the Mediterranean sun streaming through the open colonnades. Inner and outer mingle, and even the cella wall does not seem significant, as if the human worshippers felt wholly at ease despite their proximity to the sacred centre. And if 'the Greek spirit is a sculptor', could

²⁹ LA 2.675–6. Compare Hegel's description of the Gothic, 'Romantic' cathedral: a structure closed to the outside, yet open and spacious inside, allowing people of all sorts to 'wander like nomads', pursuing their different activities yet all somehow sanctified under the sublime immensity (2.692). His contrast of beautiful temple and sublime cathedral includes the following juxtapositions: horizontality versus verticality (2.674), column and beam versus pointed arch and vault (2.686), rectilinear versus organic forms (2.696), squat oblong versus soaring forest (2.688), open colonnades versus enclosed aisles (2.690), no centre versus high altar 'visible from every point' (2.691), serenity versus restless reverie of the heart (2.686, 2.689).

one detect a sculptural quality to the temple as a whole, as it invites worshippers to view it in the round? In all, Hegel's Greek temple is *classical* in that it perfectly unites form to its function of housing the cult-images of an anthropomorphic polytheism.³⁰

Such ideas remain insightful. Unfortunately, Hegel does not apply them to the Parthenon specifically or other great temples at Didyma, Ephesus, Delphi, Olympia, or Paestum, many of which were not yet excavated. Nor does the theatre receive much attention as an architectural form in which the people see and come to know themselves—apart from its appearance within the 'total' aesthetic phenomenon of ancient drama. His discussion of Roman architecture is even less complete, yet remains suggestive. For though Hegel's Romans inherited Greek temples and other forms, the context of a world-empire gave their architecture 'a totally different range and character from the Greek'.³¹ Thus, though the Greek Democritus purportedly invented the arch, its use in the Roman vault and dome facilitated a vast array of new forms, for both public and private purposes: fora, basilicas, triumphal arches, circuses, amphitheatres, aqueducts, public fountains, cloacae, catacombs, baths, palaces, and villas, along with the attendant new art of horticulture.³² This proliferation corresponds with Hegel's sense that the Roman world, more functional and purposive, split what the Greek had united. Patriotic citizens of the Greek *polis* lived a customarily public life, 'devoted the splendour and beauty of art only to public buildings', and were content with unimpressive private quarters. But the spoils of empire allowed Roman magistrates, generals, and emperors to construct vast public

³⁰ Their shared admiration for the Classical union of form and function has led to some tenuous links between Hegel and Le Corbusier (Mattick 2003: 78). Yet Le Corbusier's 'house-machine' is clearly not the Greek temple, while for Hegel, the art of architecture is not reducible to engineering, and the temple's deviation from geometrical regularity allows for an organic beauty appropriate to the 'beautiful gods'.

³¹ *LA* 2.682.

³² Democritus and arch: *LA* 2.681–2; cf. Boyd 1978. The categorization of religious epochs according to purpose in the *LR* of 1824—single purpose in Oriental, many purposes in Greek, indefinitely many in Roman religion—finds a rough parallel in Hegel's implication that Oriental architecture, more bound to natural materials and forms, has *no* purpose; Greek architecture *one* purpose (housing the cult statue); and Roman buildings an unspecified *variety* of purposes. All these are eventually brought back to a single, totalizing purpose by the Gothic cathedral, which as 'house of God' and sublimely all-inclusive form (2.685) allows the now truly infinite God to shine through vaulted roof, light-transforming windows, forest-like pillars, naturalistic arabesques, etc.—a veritable incarnation of Spirit in all things natural and human. The victory column seems to be another purposive Roman form for Hegel: those of Trajan and Napoleon are 'only a pedestal for a statue', their carved reliefs only propaganda (2.657).

buildings that blazoned forth the state's crushing power and gathered together huge, cosmopolitan aggregates of nameless 'units'—a far cry from the more intimate Greek temple. At the same time, the individual might adorn the interior spaces of villas and pleasure-gardens, honouring himself by such exquisite surroundings.³³

Hegel does not develop this architectural contrast at length, nor examine its roots in the Hellenistic kingdoms, where city-planning and monumental architecture flourished alongside private elegance. In fact, Hegel shows little interest in Roman architecture or its rich legacy. Despite abundant material (ignoring the *Maison Carrée* and Hagia Sophia, say), he singles out only the Pantheon for technical description and the bland generalization that Roman buildings are 'richer and more magnificent' than their Greek predecessors but have 'less nobility and grace'.³⁴ Roman architecture serves mainly as 'a middle form between Greek and Christian', for in abandoning column and beam for arch and vault, it looks ahead to the Gothic's pointed arches and groin vaulting; so the Roman *basilica* gave the plan for early churches.³⁵ Furthermore, Roman horticulture made the garden a quasi-architectural extension of the building proper, and looks forward to French Classicism.³⁶ This last association is perhaps what secretly damns Roman architecture in Hegel's mind. He criticizes at length the essentially Roman practice of using embedded or half columns, and the section on Roman architecture ends with a sigh of relief: the degenerate Roman models that long dominated Italian and French architecture can be skipped over, now that the revival of Greek studies allows one to turn to 'classical art in its

³³ Hegel seems to specify the period 'after the civil wars' as the time when Roman architecture began to cater to extremes of public magnificence and private luxury (*LA* 2.683). The generalization is not inaccurate: richer houses filled with paintings, mosaics, sculptures (Gazda 2010), while the private library and *recitatio* became a social pretension—and object of satire. The dichotomy persisted into late antiquity whose 'typical products... are the palace and the country-villa... In such palaces, one feels, the cultivation of friendship, of sheltered scholarship, the development of talent and religious eccentricity in the women's quarters counted for more than the "pot-latch" public postures of a previous age' (P. Brown 1971: 40).

³⁴ *LA* 2.682.

³⁵ *LA* 2.697. 'Middle form' et al.: 2.680–1. Hegel visited Constantine's basilica in Trier in 1827 (so Knox, *LA* 2.697 n.1).

³⁶ Compare *LA* 2.683 (villa of Lucullus) with 2.699–700 for remarks on horticulture as an 'architectural' shaping of a building's surroundings into 'a second external nature'. He visited Versailles in September 1827 (so Knox, *LA* 2.700 n.1), expresses preference for the regular symmetries of French gardens, and praises those of Sans Souci as 'extremely magnificent', but his distaste for parks 'rigged out with Chinese pagodas, Turkish mosques, Swiss chalets, bridges, hermitages' suggests that he might have found Hadrian's villa at Tivoli 'wearisome and burdensome' (2.699–700).

purser form'.³⁷ Indeed, Hegel seems so wilfully opposed to the notion of *any* Roman visual beauty that he glosses over the splendour of Rome itself, never praising it as a beautiful city and cradle of such architectural brilliance: an astonishing omission of what was so obvious to ancient natives and modern travellers alike.³⁸

3.2.2. Sculpture

Winckelmann too had longed to recover Greek sculpture and painting in its 'purity', untainted by later intermediaries. Most celebrated were his eloquent portrait studies of individual statues: from his *ekphraseis* of exempla like the Apollo Belvedere, Heracles Torso, and Laocoön group, Winckelmann concluded that the Greek sculptors were right to excise unnecessary naturalistic detail and include just enough to delineate a universal type, an *ideal* individual—a kingly Jupiter, wise Minerva, strong Heracles, beautiful Venus. Such masterpieces reveal how sculpture can represent the basic bodily form, and character-types (e.g. kings) with their generic markers (e.g. sceptres), but cannot 'descend' into the full realism of portraiture. Winckelmann's argument that Greek sculpture is idealizing, not fully realistic, influences art-criticism still—with many qualifications! Few take up the argument with the enthusiasm of a Herder or Goethe, for whom it reveals the universal ideals and *Urformen* of humanity itself. Hegel's admiration for Winckelmann runs along similar lines: he penetrated to the 'essence of the matter', and even discovered a 'new sense', a 'new organ' for the spirit—a formulation that encapsulates Hegel's own conception of beauty as the Ideal fusing sense and reason. He is content, therefore, to follow Winckelmann 'in

³⁷ LA 2.683. Roman columns: 2.671–2.

³⁸ Contrast Tacitus' or Vasari's praise of Rome's splendour and beauty (*Annals* 1.10.4; 1987: I, Preface). Hegel does juxtapose Rome with Periclean Athens but it is Catholic Renaissance Rome, 'the metropolis of religion': Athens's appropriation of allies' money to build 'that paragon of works of art, the Athena [i.e. Pheidias' statue] and her temple-citadel at Athens', is likened to the Papacy's selling of indulgences to build St Peter's, 'that magnificent chef d'oeuvre of Christian fabrics'—both dubious acts for Hegel, precipitating Athens's decline, and the Reformation, respectively (LH 414). The beautiful *cityscape* was not included among nineteenth-century systems of the arts, and only relatively recently has MacDonald called attention to the *city* as the form that most distinguishes the Roman architectural genius (1986). Here, Hegel can be forgiven for not knowing of future archaeological surveys in North Africa and the Middle East, but not perhaps for ignoring Gibbon's overviews of Roman public architecture (1994, Chapter 2; cf. Chapter 71).

the main' for his own detailed analysis of sculptural demeanours, attributes, materials, clothing, and so forth.³⁹

But by doing the 'German thing' and systematizing Winckelmann's observations, Hegel subtly shifts the emphasis, with the result that Greek sculpture will become a *past* perfection that cannot really be emulated any more. This complex argument begins, somewhat innocently, with Hegel grafting Winckelmann's insights onto his own dialectical substructure: the divine universal is differentiated into a pantheon of interrelated figures that in sculpture take on the *only* natural form adequate to divinity—the human body—so that sculpture becomes the 'miracle of spirit's giving itself an image of itself in something purely material'.⁴⁰ Or again, universal potentialities are bodied forth in generic human figures that seem animated in all their particular parts so as to appear as living individuals. A single mood of free self-possession pervades, animates, and harmonizes every part, from head, eyes, and mouth to posture, movement, and drapery, so that the whole appears 'Argus-eyed'—a 'spiritual individual'.⁴¹ In addition, Hegel's UPI dialectic 'encodes' the intuitions of Winckelmann and Lessing, purporting to articulate the rational reason why the Greek statues seem at once so absolutely calm and self-sufficient, and yet so universally suggestive: their dynamic poses hint at an entire action and a character that seems to comprise 'the potentiality of an entire world'; without actually moving they seem 'capable of anything'.⁴² To encounter these miraculous unions

³⁹ 'Essence of the matter': LA 2.723–4. 'New organ': 1.63; the famous metaphor recurs in e.g. Schadewaldt 1941: 4. Winckelmann 'main' authority: 2.727. Following Winckelmann: 2.750–64 (demeanour etc), 2.730–1 ('Greek profile' objectively, paradigmatically beautiful), 2.742–50 (clothing). Regarding the last, Hegel argues that the Greeks were right to portray the male nude and the female clothed; Greek tunics have greater 'ideality' than modern trousers and coats, which being machine- or tailor-cut to rigid rules, are 'entirely inartistic' (2.746; cf. 1.164–5); nevertheless, it would betray 'an unintelligent enthusiasm' to represent a Napoleon or Blücher naked or in 'ideal clothing' (2.749). On a topical debate, Hegel thus sides with Winckelmann and Benjamin West against Joshua Reynolds, and would hardly have approved of, say, Canova's colossal nude, 'Napoleon as Mars the Peacemaker' (1802–6; cf. Squire 2011: 1–4, 117–20). Hegel's essentialist analysis of sculpture is defended by Houlgate (2007), while Prettejohn finds in it complex 'ramifications... not yet exhausted' for a new humanism (2012: 104–7).

⁴⁰ LA 2.710.

⁴¹ LA 2.705; 'spiritual individuality' is a favourite phrase for capturing the essence of sculpture (e.g. 2.797), the Greek gods (1.444, 1.454–6), the classical Ideal (1.317, 1.471–2), and even art itself (1.301, 1.432).

⁴² Entire world: LA 2.739–40. The association of youth and being 'capable of everything' (*zu allem fähig*, 1.151, 1.177, 2.740, 2.741) goes back at least to the Nürnberg graduation speech of 14 September 1810 (*Werke* 4.331). Concerning Lessing's idea, ancient critics spoke of the *rhythmoi* (Latin *numeri*), which 'convey the whole nature of the movement', as in Myron's Doryphoros (Pollitt 1972: 57–9; cf. 27).

of opposites is indeed a religious experience. They capture 'the peaceful divine image in its blessed perfection without any inner struggle'. Their 'severe loftiness or blissful self-absorption'⁴³ is utterly absorbing for viewers too, and elevates them to a sudden, pre-conceptual intuition of the Idea: before one stands the living god, it seems. It is as if Plotinus *was* right: through Pheidias' Zeus shines the One, and the best sculptures are manifestations of 'the Absolute, of God himself as God in his independence'.⁴⁴

While 'logicizing' an aesthetic reverence, the dialectic also grounds Hegel's rationalization of common *critiques* of Greek statuary. Greek sculptures are ideal, but not ideal enough in Hegel's sense, for in them the universal Idea is not yet articulated into all its internal complexity of particularity, subjectivity, relationality. Limited to depicting the basic human form, and general types, sculpture is 'substantial', but cannot depict full personality, action, and situations, and so must lack the 'depth and infinity of subjective consciousness'. Calm and self-enclosed, the Greeks' sculpted gods remain finite, with no robust relation to externality.⁴⁵ In aesthetic terms, they remain 'blind', their eyes sightless, for even if eyes were painted on, or jewels inserted in the sockets, statues cannot capture the spiritual depth of the glance.⁴⁶ In sculptural groups, therefore, they remain essentially alone, and even the 'Hermes holding baby Dionysus' (one of Hegel's favourites) cannot depict the living gaze of intersubjective love, so definitive of Madonna and Child paintings.⁴⁷ Furthermore, a whiff of Pheidian melancholy is hardly adequate to the negativity of history—the conflict, wounds, pain, ugliness, death that are epitomized in Christ's Passion. Hegel's 'Trinitarian' ontology concludes that an entity is real (or ideal) to the degree that it gives space to this internal moment of negativity. In this regard, Classical sculpture is more adequate than architecture to the ideality of the real, but less so than the Romantic arts, which 'subdue and

⁴³ LA 2.766. 'Blessed perfection': 1.740.

⁴⁴ LA 2.623; cf. 1.157 ('the ideal work of art confronts us like a blessed god').

⁴⁵ As substantial: e.g. LA 2.712, 2.741. Lacking subjective depth: 2.791. 'Exempt from relation to anything else': 2.712.

⁴⁶ Thus Hegel would adjudicate a scholarly debate: it is 'incontestable' that the iris was absent from the eyes of 'the really classic' busts of antiquity (LA 2.731–2). This commonplace of the Greeks' sightless, serene statues persists at least until Virginia Woolf, whose Jacob is imagined as 'more statuesque, noble and eyeless than ever' (*Jacob's Room*, Chapter 13).

⁴⁷ Hegel misidentifies the Munich Hermes as a 'satyr' or 'faun', even as he returns to it four times (LA 1.202, 1.453, 2.733, 2.801).

transfigure' ugliness within a larger, redemptive whole.⁴⁸ For this reason, a modern person cannot respond to Greek statues with the Greeks' own spontaneous warmth of recognition. Study is required to appreciate the myths and conventions: the mediation of connoisseurs and scholarly 'bookworms' may impress on one that Greek sculptural images do exhaust spiritual archetypes, and thus help explain why the aesthetic Greeks did 'bow the knee' before their sculpted gods and honour them with rituals and temples; post-Kantian theory may allow one to understand why these idealizing sculptures must occupy the 'beautiful middle' between natural substance and subjective spirit, between rule-bound architecture and the Romantic arts of the heart, between allegory and portraiture, for its figures are neither *mere* types nor *actual* individuals, neither abstractly symbolic nor fraught with Romantic complexity, but a miraculous blend of both. Much conceptual mediation is required to appreciate Greek sculptures as 'spiritual individuals'. But philosophical appreciation is not aesthetic rapture: modern viewers feel their 'abstract' quality, aesthetically, religiously, logically, and so can understand also why those old stone idols leave *us* 'somewhat cold'.⁴⁹

Hegel's dialectical analysis would thus attempt to capture the real nature and experiences of Greek sculpture, as witnessed especially (but not exclusively) by its greatest connoisseur, Winckelmann. When he delves deeper into the individuality of particular works, he adopts three approaches, each proceeding from early and simple to late and complex. First, *modes of portrayal* range from single statues to groups to reliefs.⁵⁰ Single, free-standing figures are the earliest, simplest, and sculpturally truest: yet of the several examples mentioned, all are comparatively late, and only Polycleitus' Argive Hera in fact serves the original function of sculpture, 'to furnish images in temples'.⁵¹ Sculptural groups animate their figures to some action: in this context are mentioned the Dioscuri on Mt Cavallo (good enough to be by Pheidias and Praxiteles); pedimental groups like the Niobe group (from the temple of Apollo Sosianus in Rome); the Laocoön group, which Hegel was one of the first to criticize as a later, mannerist work, showing

⁴⁸ LA 2.864; cf. 1.222, 2.815–17 (Hercules' Labours versus Christ's 'way of sorrows'), 2.823–4 (Christ's Passion versus Laocoön who suffers nobly but does not *despair*); cf. 2.769, 2.817, 2.830).

⁴⁹ LA 2.797; cf. 1.272, 1.275, 1.485. 'Bookworms': 2.769. 'Spiritual individuals': 2.701.

⁵⁰ LA 2.765–71.

⁵¹ Polyclitus' Doryphorus and Dice-players, Myron's Discobolus and Ladas the Runner, an Eros, the *Spinario* (Boy with Thorn), Medici Venus, and Apollo Belvedere fill out this unsystematic list.

vestiges of 'Classical' loftiness, but hardly worth fifty years of tedious psychologizing since Lessing's 1766 treatise; and as an extended afterthought, Schadow's Victory rising impressively over the Brandenburg Gate, and Tieck's Apollo, less successful for its remote placing on the Berlin Opera House.⁵² High and low reliefs move sculpture even closer to the narrative potential of painting, and allow it to merge ever more into daily life, both sacred and profane—on temple walls, friezes, and metopes, but also on cups, bowls, coins, tripods, and other everyday tools. In such work, it is as if free-standing statues were moving out of their temple repose and taking up new abodes in busy niches of secular life.

A somewhat analogous evolution from sacred to ostensibly secular is suggested by the different *Materials for Sculpture*.⁵³ Wood, often painted, was the first, imperfect material: 'A stick, a post on the top of which was placed a head—that was the beginning'. So Hegel alludes implicitly to early *xoana*, which he understands as a form of rudimentary symbolism, seemingly unaware that these rough-hewn pieces were often revered as more sacred than later, artistic 'show-pieces'.⁵⁴ More fittingly ideal materials for the sculpted gods are ivory, gold, bronze, and marble. The colours and expense of ivory and gold appeal to earlier artists, but of all materials, bronze is the most malleable, adaptable, and popular, favoured by Myron and Polyclitus, used 'universally' in fifth-century BC statues, and shaped also into 'perfect masterpieces of beauty' in many Greek coins. 'Most appropriate' of all for sculpture's inherent universality is marble, pure-white, smooth, and 'abstract', a fact apparently grasped by fourth-century masters like Praxiteles and Scopas: so Hegel gives his own logical twist to the neoclassical cult of white, arguing that white is the abstract universal of colour—not itself a colour, yet with potential to become any.⁵⁵ Finally, jewels and gems are sculpted in the most intricate ways, such that they can recap in miniature 'the whole range of sculpture from the single figure of a god, through the most varied kinds of grouping'. Something similar might be said of the art of

⁵² Laocoön group: LA 2.769. J.G. Schadow, C.F. Tieck: 2.770–1.

⁵³ LA 2.771–8: an approach taken by Pliny as he moves from gold (*Naturalis Historia* 9.33) to bronze (9.34), marble (9.36), and gems (9.37).

⁵⁴ LA 2.772–3 with some examples. 'The oldest sculptures are painted wood' (2.707): reluctantly accepting finds of traces of paint on statues, Hegel explains them as relics of a primitive desire for adornment which the Greeks' 'truer and more spiritual insight' (2.745; cf. 2.733) gradually overcame, bringing sculpture to its *telos* in 'monochromatic bronze or marble' (2.773). Whatever the truth of Hegel's sculptural essentialism, we now know better how positively garishly the Greeks painted their sculptures (and temples). For early *xoana*, see Pausanias 2.4.5, 9.40.3 with Donohue 1988. 'Show-pieces, *agalmata*': Burkert 1985: 187.

⁵⁵ Bronze, coins: LA 2.774–6. 'Abstractness of white marble': 2.774.

coin-making, which Hegel may have regarded as a late form of sculpture: the art reached its zenith 'in the age of Alexander', only to decline under the Romans and in prosaic modern states where coins are machine-stamped with a view to economic need only, though Napoleon should be praised for efforts 'to revive the beauty of the classics'.⁵⁶ So, from early wood to Hellenistic gems and coins, Hegel's classification is roughly historical. It is also quasi-logical: wood, ivory, and gold can hold a general shape (U); bronze's malleability makes it endlessly adaptable in all modes and sizes (P); while marble 'in its soft purity, whiteness, absence of colour, and the delicacy of its sheen harmonizes in the most direct way with the aim of sculpture' and so returns to its concrete 'truth' (I).⁵⁷ Needless to say, there are loose ends: why, for example, were Pheidias' great statues of Olympian Zeus and Athena Parthenos chryselephantine, rather than bronze or marble?⁵⁸

If Pliny lies behind Hegel's organization of sculpture according to material, he returns more obviously to Winckelmann for his own, very brief history of the art. For Hegel, too, the Egyptians were the pioneers of Classicism. They lacked nothing in purely technical skill, and could sculpt even hard stone like basalt into accurate renderings of the human body. Yet, as unfree workers in a caste system, his Egyptian sculptors were craftsmen (*Handwerker*), not artists proper (*Künstler*). They did not command the spiritual insight to create truly free work, and the figures produced by their 'Oriental' spirit were necessarily rigid, rectilinear, static, merely symbolic of the human form.⁵⁹ With scanty materials at his disposal—the iconic Kritios Boy was not discovered until 1866—Hegel cannot give many concrete details of how an Oriental spirit lingered on in the early Egyptianizing *kouroi*, blockish, yet moving one foot forward as if into a new Greek space of naturalistic anthropomorphism.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, that commonplace of later art-criticism is wholly accommodated within his art-historical schema. Symbolic Egypt being the soil, as it were, of Classical Greece, it was out of the

⁵⁶ Gems recapitulate all sculpture: LA 2.777; cf. 2.734 and 2.801 (nymphs with Bacchus). Coins: 2.776.

⁵⁷ LA 2.776.

⁵⁸ Hegel's answer to *this* question seems somewhat makeshift: the ivory-gold materials deviate from the essence of sculpture, as a concession to the 'living needs of the people' and perhaps their need for a richly *sensuous* display of power (LA 2.707; cf. 2.772–3).

⁵⁹ Egyptian craft, not free art: LA 2.781 (citing Herodotus 2.167, Plato *Laws* 656d–e).

⁶⁰ Commonplace: in contrasting the Egyptian group *Mycerinus and his Queen* (2599–2571 bc) with the *kouros*-type, Janson acknowledges technical similarities but judges the Greek works more truly sculptural—free-standing, organic, produced by an 'act of liberation' from static stone, and endowed with a 'spirit basically different' from the Egyptian (1991: 159–62).

once independent Egyptian temple-complex, with its theriomorphic sculpture, that the free-standing Greek statue emerged as its 'living' truth.⁶¹ This assumption that early Greece must especially reflect some Oriental predecessors underlies his own attempt to interpret the newly recovered pedimental statues from the temple of Zeus on Aphaia, removed to Munich in 1811: traces of paint, rigid postures, and accomplished technique suggest that its sculptures could copy nature brilliantly but could not yet imbue their figures with 'spiritual animation'—a veritable 'Egyptian' production on Greek soil.⁶²

In his overlapping discussions of the modes, materials, and history of (Greek) sculpture, Hegel circles around the thesis that sculpture progressed from the symbolic and abstract to ever more naturalistic representations of the human form. Hellenistic statues of peasants, boxers, and fishermen would seem to fit into this narrative, but Hegel knew little of these.⁶³ Instead, his story of sculpture's progressive decline into realism leaves Greece altogether to jump into Etruscan and Roman forms. Recalling Winckelmann's discussion of a naturalistic Etruscan statue, Hegel surmises that 'what was at home on Roman soil from the start was not the ideal but nature in its prosaic actuality'.⁶⁴ An 'artistic "truth to nature" permeates every aspect of Roman sculpture',⁶⁵ and therefore Roman sculpture proper is synonymous with portraiture. This remains an important generalization—but one that Hegel does not exploit. He does not explore in any detail Roman death-masks, portrait busts, and reliefs, nor does he link their naturalism (and often gritty 'verism') to his own association of the Roman spirit with facticity and subjective particularity.⁶⁶ He glosses over the proliferation of sculpture through Roman fora, basilicas, temples, palaces, baths,

⁶¹ See LA 2.780–5 for the 'inner and necessary connection' between Egyptian and Greek sculpture (with Herodotus 2.41ff as prime authority).

⁶² LA 2.786. Hegel's analysis blends Winckelmann's periodization with remarks from J. M. Wagner's *On the Aeginetan Sculptures* (1817)—a work that helped initiate a non-Winckelmannian treatment of colour in ancient sculptures. On the Aphaia sculptures, see Ohly 1977, Dyson 2006: 134–5.

⁶³ The 'Hellenistic' was yet to be named and conceptualized by Droysen, Hegel's one-time student.

⁶⁴ LA 2.787.

⁶⁵ LA 2.788.

⁶⁶ For example, the *Ara Pacis* (despite its strong idealizing quality) is almost unprecedented in expressing 'a deeper devotion to fact and actuality, in presenting contemporary, living people... just as they were at a given moment, on 4th July 13 bc' (Toynbee 1953: 76). On Roman 'verism', see Richter's classic argument that it had Greco-Roman (rather than Italic or Etruscan) origins: Hellenistic artists adapted their craft to the demands of late-Republican patrons (1955b). The narrative reliefs of Trajan's column are, again, dismissed as political propaganda—not free art: LA 2.657.

private atria and gardens—the plethora of contexts enabled by Rome's many-purposed architecture. Indeed, if Roman art sees a further particularization of the Ideal, then would not Roman *concrete* represent for Hegel a spiritual advance, as natural ingredients become an even more integrated moment of human making, yielding a material immeasurably more 'plastic' than marble? Such conceptual possibilities are passed over, as Hegel stresses the negativity of Roman art: his Romans were not an artistic people, their purposive religion was not conducive to aesthetic presence, and so Roman sculpture must be a weak after-echo of the Greek. This negative relation is encapsulated in the sardonic praise of Mummius, conqueror of Corinth (146 BC): 'this excellent man' razed the city and shipped his cargo of looted sculptures but warned the crew that 'if these were lost they would have to create others the same in their place'.⁶⁷ Here is a dubious philhellenism that regards art-works as mere material things, pieces of property that can be *willed* into existence by mechanical reproduction. For copying inevitably results in inferior productions⁶⁸—a thought that implicitly condemns all 'Roman copies of Greek originals' as cheap plagiarisms.

Hegel's zeal to identify sculpture with the Greek spirit colours his views on post-classical work also. Sculpture necessarily abstracts the bodily form from the totality of personality: marble or bronze cannot reveal the inner 'heart', and the spirit of love cannot shine through their hard surfaces. Therefore, while the Egyptian group of Isis and Horus, the 'Munich Faun', and the Niobe group prefigure that most typical of Christian genres, the Madonna and Child, they differ crucially in that their figures stand side by side, essentially alone and not joined by the gaze of love that unites Mary with the Christ child.⁶⁹ The aloof Olympians lend themselves to eyeless sculptural representation, but the God who enters lovingly into a suffering world can be better captured in painting. The greater spiritual depth of Christianity therefore ensures a decline in sculptural standards, and where the Christian church cannot *literally* 'house' a spiritual God, statues lose their independence and retreat into niches and carved reliefs, adornments of the cathedral rather than its vital centre. This insight has become standard,

⁶⁷ LA 2.774–5; cf. 2.778 (Aemilius Paulus' Macedonian plunder) and esp. LH 312 ('Their works of art were only what they had collected from every part of Greece, and therefore not productions of their own... Elegance—culture—was foreign to the Romans *per se*; they sought to obtain it from the Greeks, and for this purpose a vast number of Greek slaves were brought to Rome').

⁶⁸ LA 2.772.

⁶⁹ See LA 2.733, 2.784, and 2.800–1 (Isis–Horus, Madonna–Child), 2.824–6 (Niobe and children).

but for Hegel statuary could *never* regain its pre-eminence in Christian Europe.⁷⁰ All later revivals of free-standing sculpture are unimportant echoes of the Greek achievement. It is true that one 'cannot sufficiently admire' the *Pietà* of Michelangelo, whose 'tremendous' and rare genius was to combine 'the plastic principle of the Greek' with Romantic subjectivity. But Bernini and the Baroque are passed over in silence, while the neoclassical revival 'struggles' rather fitfully in the wake of the Greeks: Rauch's Berlin sculptures merit some passing praise and his bust of Goethe has a classical perfection as if it had wandered into time like 'an immortal god amongst mortal men'. These are exceptions: Thorvaldsen, C.F. Tieck, and R. Schadow are mentioned mainly in criticism, Flaxman is ignored, and even Canova, feted in his time as 'the modern Pheidias', is passed over.⁷¹

The argument that sculpture is anachronistic in the Christian world draws on Hegel's sense that its 'first and highest vocation' is depicting the classical Ideal.⁷² Indeed, the argument draws on one of Hegel's most striking epigrams: 'the Greek spirit was a sculptor'. Here, a basic fact that impresses Hegel is the incredible profusion of statues in Greek sacred spaces, assemblies, markets, crossroads, houses—many produced by unrivalled artistic talent and maintained by the piety of cities and individuals. Statues are hard to make, and expensive, and against the vast numbers of Greek works extant or mentioned in the sources, Hegel tallies up the tiny number of bronzes in contemporary Prussia.⁷³ What could explain the startling difference? What set the Greeks on to their unique fervour for statues? Only a religion that took sculpture not as a symbol of the divine, as a 'luxury or a superfluity', but as the divine itself. A religion with anthropomorphic gods will also divinize the human form, and feel in its beautiful statues not *images* of the gods, but the gods *themselves*—not accessed in silent meditation, but there to be seen, touched. The fact that the sculpted god is *housed* in the temple does not draw Hegel on to explore its logical consequences: how the cult statues were

⁷⁰ Compare LA 2.789 with Janson 1991: 342 ('free-standing statues...all but disappeared from Western Art after the fifth century'). The first post-classical free-standing sculpture was Donatello's St Mark, a work that 'mastered at one stroke the central achievement of ancient sculpture' (447). LA does not mention Donatello.

⁷¹ Michelangelo: LA 2.790. Neoclassical 'struggles': 2.789. Rauch: 1.401 (his 1826 Blücher), 1.484 (his Goethe). Criticism of neoclassical work: Thorvaldsen's Mercury (1.203); Tieck's Apollo (2.770–1); R. Schadow's Sandal Binder (1.203); but see 2.770 for praise of J. G. Schadow's Victory. Pigalle is also mentioned (1.202), though not so damningly as by Winckelmann and Rousseau (citations in Gilbert and Kuhn 1939: 299). Thorvaldsen's reputation was such that Felix Mendelssohn singled him out (with Goethe and Beethoven) as a counterexample to Hegel's language of the end of art.

⁷² LA 2.790.

⁷³ LA 2.775.

fed, washed, dressed, and paraded in festivals as if they were living beings with human needs and whims. He does gesture in this direction when he suggests that before such vital presences as the Classical statues, worshippers 'bowed the knee'.⁷⁴ Only a deep religiosity could animate viewers, patrons, artists, and whole cities to the fervour of the Greek accomplishment. Hence the *Kunstreligion* that Hegel ascribes to the Greeks can be narrowed down to a religion of sculpture primarily. As a religious reality and imperative, sculpture was for Hegel's Greeks

not just a decoration but a living need, necessarily to be satisfied, just as painting was to the Venetians in the days of their splendour. It is only for this reason that we can explain, given the difficulties of sculpture, the enormous mass of statues, these forests of statues of every kind, which existed by the thousand or two thousand in a single city, in Elis, Athens, Corinth, and even in considerable numbers in every smaller city, as well as in Magna Graecia and the Aegean Islands. (LA 2.763–4)

The image of 'forests of sculptures' may go back to Cassiodorus' conceit of Rome's 'other population'. While Goethe also invokes the metaphor for Rome, Hegel applies it solely to the Greek world, whose cities and island-states were 'animated and, as it were, peopled by works of sculpture'.⁷⁵ Indeed, if these sculptures become Greece's other population, then the 'real' population are themselves compared to living statues in their idealized existence. The protagonists of classical drama will be 'sculptural' and the circle of Periclean genius becomes a human pantheon, a statuary hall or circle of individuals who in their aesthetic freedom *sculpted themselves* to perfect spiritual individuality:

⁷⁴ 'Worship of images', reverence for statues (including Neoplatonic practices of theurgy): LP 2.409–10, 2.449–50.

⁷⁵ LA 2.702. Goethe's *ein Volk von Statuen: Maximen und Reflexiomen* 1826, no. 293. P. Stewart 2004: 117–56 traces the conceit to Cassiodorus, but the idea does have older parallels: Pliny's astonishment at the numbers of statues in sanctuaries and cities—both Greek and Roman (*Naturalis Historia* 9.17–19); the quip of Petronius' character that in Athens 'it is easier to find a god than a man' (*Satyricon* 3.17); and the remarks of St Paul and others that Athens is *kateidōlon*, 'filled with idols' (Acts 17:16; cf. Pausanias 1.24.3, Livy 45.27, Strabo 10.472). One recent estimate is that by the mid-sixth century BC there were already 20,000 sculpted *kouroi* in the Greek world. Well might Vasari contrast the absence of sculpture from Constantine to the Renaissance with the 30,000 statues in Rhodes and Athens, the even greater number in Olympus, Delphi, and Corinth (1987: I.1, Preface).

In its poets and orators, historians and philosophers, Greece is not to be understood at its heart unless we bring with us as a key to our comprehension an insight into the ideals of sculpture and unless we consider from the point of view of their plasticity not only the heroic figures in epic and drama but also the actual statesmen and philosophers... Pericles himself, Phidias, Plato, Sophocles above all, Thucydides too, Xenophon, Socrates—each of them of his own sort, unimpaired by another's; all of them are out-and-out artists by nature, ideal artists shaping themselves, individuals of a single cast, works of art standing there like immortal and deathless images of the gods.⁷⁶

The passage is a key for Hegel's understanding of Greek *Sittlichkeit*, the *polis* as an aesthetic community, and the Greek world in its historical contexts. The 'subjective works of art' of the city's well-rounded citizens make images of themselves in 'objective works of art' (not least the sculptures), both of which are abstractions from the 'political works of art' of an Athens, Sparta, or Thebes. Citizens, statues, *poleis* are alike in each being separate, free-standing, self-enclosed totalities. The spirit pervading citizens and their cities was the ground for the 'forests' of Greek statues, while these statues in turn gave the Greeks their images of the gods and of themselves—and hence shaped the Greek mind. It is through statuary, therefore, that one can most immediately re-enter into that mind.⁷⁷ The Greek sculptors were also hewers of the human mind, writ large in world-history. The rough materials inherited from Egypt and the Orient were shaped by the free Greek imagination into so many beautiful products, and if the 'transformation of the Natural to the Spiritual is the Greek Spirit itself',⁷⁸ then it was the Greek 'sculptural' culture that first really elevated mankind to self-reflection and self-knowledge.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ LA 2.719–20. The image of a Greek 'circle of luminaries' (and implicitly a sculptural hall) is a favourite one (2.986–7, LP 1.322, 1.393, 1.427; cf. Zeller 1881: I.142 n.1 with further references to LA, LR, LP, LH, and Vischer's Hegelian *Aesthetics*), as is that of a 'gallery'—of historical *Geister*, epics, philosophers. Such images invite comparison with the circle of 'beautiful souls' inhabiting Clarendon (de Wolmar's estate in Rousseau's *Julie*), or 'Weimar's Courtyard of the Muses' (1860, T. von Oer), or the Romantic circle at Jena, described by F. Schlegel as a 'symphony of professors' (in Ziolkowski 1992: 261).

⁷⁷ LA 2.719–20; cf. 2.1195. The idea is propounded vigorously by Winckelmann and A. Schlegel (1876 [1809]: Lecture III).

⁷⁸ LH 246.

⁷⁹ Greek spirit as sculptor or 'plastic artist': LA 2.719–20, LH 1.258; cf. LA 2.790, 2.800, PS §699 (*geistiger Arbeiter*), LH 248. The idea, if not quite the specific image, has a long tradition: for the speakers of the Platonic *Epinomis* it is an 'axiom... that, whatever the Greeks take from

3.2.3. Painting

In Winckelmann's hopeful extrapolation, 'Everything that can be said in praise of Greek sculpture should in all likelihood also hold true for Greek painting'.⁸⁰ For Hegel, the virtues of Greek sculpture were carried over into the best Christian painting, and his treatment of painting as a genre and historical phenomenon is bound up with his understanding of what Greek sculpture is, and is not.⁸¹ Greek sculpture is supreme in depicting the human form, but though it is brilliantly anthropomorphic, it is yet not anthropomorphic enough.⁸² Its own inner dynamism drives it out of the beautiful middle position between abstraction and naturalism, into portrait-busts and narrative relief, with their greater capacity to represent the particular, temporal, and subjective.⁸³ Ultimately, sculpture finds its 'truth' and inner *telos* in painting, whose palette of colours can depict the eye in its living depth, the face in its subtle emotion, and the body in relation to others. Through colour, perspective, and illusion painting can recreate the appearance of a world in all its chiaroscuro complexity. Indeed, it improves upon nature and history in that it can capture the essence of a scene, and begin to spiritualize it—reducing its three dimensions to a flat surface, contracting time's flow to a single, revelatory moment, and selecting some perspective or action to epitomize a whole scene or character. Over this apparent objective world are diffused the feelings of the self-conscious spirit, the heart, and so at the centre of the painted image lies its essential principle: 'subjectivity aware of itself',⁸⁴ both in all its innumerable moods and in its inner identity with an outer world. Because of this, painting demands a mentality that unites attention to natural detail with an equal reverence for the heart's nuances: a spirit that senses the inner

the barbarians, they bring it to fuller perfection' (987d); an 'axiom' that has been applied to Greek myth, mathematics (Heath 1981: 1.3–9, van der Waerden 1975: 83), and Greek philosophy—by *philosophes* like Diderot and Condillac (Gay 1966: 79), and by Hegel himself (*LP* 1.149–50). One might add that Platonic images of 'sculpting' the self into perfection (*Republic* 360e1–361d6, 500d4–8) recur widely, in Plotinian ethics (e.g. *Enneads* 1.6.9), Goethean *Bildung*, and Nietzschean ideas of aesthetic self-creation.

⁸⁰ 1986 [1755]: VI (in Preziosi 2009: 33).

⁸¹ See Houlgate 2000 for an overview of Hegel's knowledge and analysis of painting. Like Winckelmann, Hegel repeatedly stresses the need for autopsy, for painting even more than for architecture and sculpture (e.g. *LA* 1.169–71, 2.629, 2.869–70, 2.1218).

⁸² 'The anthropomorphism of art remains incomplete in ancient sculpture': *LA* 2.790; cf. 1.435, 505–6, *LP* 3.4.

⁸³ E.g. *LA* 2.853.

⁸⁴ *LA* 2.802.

correspondence of objective and subjective. This mentality is (in Hegel's analysis) the very nature of Christian love: the feeling that one exists in the other and is at home there. As a result, while Greeks, Romans and others have had their master-painters,⁸⁵ the genre truly flourishes only in Christian cultures.

More specifically, Greek sculpture anticipates Christian painting, both in content and form. Content-wise, the 'miracle' of the sculptural Ideal looks forward to that greater miracle of the Incarnation, when God became flesh, *actually* alive beyond the semblances of stone or bronze. Hegel's Christ represents the divine universal's full entry into the particularities of nature and history, and so Christian narratives provide more appropriate material for painting than do the thin personalities of the Greek Olympians. Those ideal figures are not real subjects, they represent only the abstract promise of living presence, and so their marble-white statues cannot bear the full sensuous significance of light and its colours. For light (in Hegel's startling association) is simple self-identity—the first 'self' through which nature begins to become subjective.⁸⁶ Light particularizes itself into the primary colours, and so as a concrete universal, colour affords pleasure that is not merely sensuous, but rational. In great paintings, all fundamental colours are present, and in privileging colour over drawing and design, Hegel not only takes sides in a long controversy (*disegno* versus *colore*, *Poussinistes* versus *Rubénistes*), and rejects the formalism of Kant and Schelling. He also tacitly points to the unsatisfying abstractness of 'Classical' white. There is a *rational* need for colour that drives art beyond sculpture, and ultimately beyond mosaic, fresco, and tempera, to oils, and so the historical centres of painting progress from Florence to Venice and then the Low Countries: two maritime areas where misty atmospheres stimulated the use of oil colours.⁸⁷ The 'summit of colouring' is attained in what Diderot calls carnation, the 'colour tone of human flesh which unites all other colours marvellously in itself':⁸⁸ a concept that for Hegel seems to parallel that of the Incarnation, for Christ united all peoples in His individual person. Superlative beyond even this superlative is the final 'magic' effect of *sfumato* where colours are so fused, expressive, objectless, and continuous that 'they begin to pass over into the

⁸⁵ LA 2.799–800.

⁸⁶ LA 2.808.

⁸⁷ Colour over form: cf. Houlgate 2000: 66, Sallis 2007. Venice and Lowlands: LA 2.839; cf. 2.843.

⁸⁸ LA 2.846.

sphere of music',⁸⁹ and naturalistic representation gives way to the purely inner life of the spirit.

With regard to content, more specifically, where Greek sculpture typically represents a circle of gods and heroes, Christian painting takes for its subject-matter Jesus' life, Mary, the Apostles, disciples, and saints, as well as Old Testament patriarchs and prophets—a veritable second pantheon.⁹⁰ Now the spirit expressed is not aloof Olympian power, but that power expressing itself as infinite compassion. Hence God the Father is too transcendent to be often painted, though van Eyck's Ghent altarpiece could 'be set beside the Olympian Zeus' as an exceptional instance of the artistic sublime. The visible divinity of Christ gives more appropriate content, and so in fact there are numberless paintings of Christ as infant, child, teacher, and as the centre of the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension. Christ as teacher can (Hegel opines) be well represented 'as the noblest, worthiest, wisest man, like Pythagoras, for example, or one of the other philosophers in Raphael's *School of Athens*', but in general, painting Christ with 'the beauty of the Greek form' is wholly inappropriate.⁹¹ Self-sufficient sculptural calm is even less appropriate for paintings of the Passion. For what Christ suffers is not just physical pain (like Laocoön's) but an 'awesome suffering, the feeling of infinite negativity' and of a 'soul in its sufferings of love'.⁹² Only a few masters, like Guido Reni, have been able to paint this 'night of the spirit' with flesh-notes 'not to be found in the human face'—and certainly not in monochrome marble. Transfiguring love appears also in representations of the Holy Family, particularly the Madonna and Child or Descent from the Cross—the absolute centre of Christian painting, to be contrasted with the Laocoön and Niobe groups which were for Winckelmann the centre of classical sculpture: to Hegel's eyes, each of *those* figures remains resigned to a fate imposed from without, while in paintings of the Pietà, Mary grieves and loves—and loves everything in and through her grief.⁹³ Finally, prayer is 'an elevation of the heart to God who is absolute love', and so a prayerful disposition dissolves the self's alienation from its Other. In paintings of the Apostles, saints, and martyrs, it is this prayerful confidence in God's love

⁸⁹ LA 2.848. ⁹⁰ See esp. LA 2.815–19.

⁹¹ Van Eyck, Zeus: LA 2.820. Christ as Greek philosopher: 2.821. 'Least of all can the forms of classical beauty suffice' for Christ: 2.821–2.

⁹² *Ecce homo*, 'night of the spirit', Italian masters, and the Laocoön: LA 2.824–5. 'Sufferings of love': 2.830.

⁹³ Mary and Niobe: LA 2.817, 2.824–6; cf. 2.800–1 (a gem of the nymphs tending infant Bacchus is beautiful but lacks the 'spiritual inwardness and depth of feeling' of a Madonna and Child). Laocoön versus paintings of the Crucifixion: 2.821–2.

that becomes the real content of the art-work, as it radiates out from isolated figures to suffuse the scene and situation: a confidence that, by implication, the proud stones of Greece know little of.⁹⁴

Hegel's short history of painting continues to reference Greek sculpture, even as it concentrates on Rumohr's three periods of Christian pictures: Byzantine, Italian Renaissance, and Netherlandish painting, corresponding roughly to Symbolic, Classical, and Romantic forms.⁹⁵ Here the 'few remains' of Greek and Roman painting, on vases, in mosaics or villas such as the 'House of the Tragic Poet' in Pompeii, hardly delay Hegel, and there are only scattered remarks about great names like Polygnotus, Apollodorus, Zeuxis, and Apelles.⁹⁶ He does not explicitly tackle theoretical statements by Xenophon and others—about painting's ability to make visible the soul's invisible *ethos*, for example.⁹⁷ Nor does he explore through Roman busts and portraits (either of the 'Republican' or late Antique type) his own thesis that portraits select details to capture an individual's 'inmost being' better than nature itself, and so represent the pinnacle of painting.⁹⁸ Nor is Hegel interested in poring over Pausanias, Pliny, Philostratus, or Lucian to reimagine what lost paintings might have been like—as if he were content with the fairly *a priori* generalization that 'in antiquity many excellent portraits may have been painted but neither the classical treatment of natural objects nor its vision of human or divine affairs was of such a kind as to make possible in painting the expression of such a depth of spirituality as was presented in Christian painting'.⁹⁹

Painting for Hegel therefore begins essentially with the Byzantines—that hybrid people of late antiquity who were at once Greek, Roman, and Christian. Indeed, their painted icons hark directly back to the Oriental symbolism of Egyptian mummy-masks, while their figures' 'simple

⁹⁴ Prayer as elevation (*beten*, not petitionary *bitten*): LA 2.827–8.

⁹⁵ See LA 2.870–1 for a summary; Kultermann 1993: 86–8 discusses Rumohr's contemporary influence and reputation.

⁹⁶ Vases, mosaics mentioned: LA 2.871; cf. Gothic mosaics as 'decoration of empty surfaces' (2.807). Citing the Lectures of 1820–1, Houlgate argues that Hegel's adherence to flowing colour militates against his accepting as painting proper such media as mosaic, collage, or the pointillism of, say, Seurat (2000: 67, 79 n.31). Pompeii: 2.799–800.

⁹⁷ See Xenophon *Memorabilia* 3.10.1–5; cf. Aristotle *Poetics* 1450a24–28, Pliny *Naturalis Historia* 35.98 with Pollitt 1972: 44, 1974: 52ff and 293ff.

⁹⁸ LA 2.865–7: portrait painters are likened to truly 'artistic historians' (2.866)—possibly dethroning history painting. On Roman portraiture, see Fejfer 2008; cf. Richter 1955a and Pollitt 1972: 50–4 for Greek precedents from the humanistic Classical, and even Archaic periods.

⁹⁹ LA 2.800; cf. 2.814.

independent self-repose' recalls 'the stiff statuesque character of sculpture' that is their Greek heritage.¹⁰⁰ The Byzantines' Christ, Mary, and saints are statuesque indeed, as they appear isolated and timeless, suspended on an undifferentiated gold background, with little action, situation, or any but external spatial relations. If in fact icons were so composed to convey the unchanging mystery of God, Hegel is not impressed, and dismisses them as spiritless products of merely traditional craft: they may have been revered once as 'miracle-working pictures', but as art-works they are 'the very worst of all'.¹⁰¹ There is little depth of spiritual love here, Hegel opines, and he ends the section with a long quote from Rumohr, suggesting that Byzantine practices of corporeal mutilation help explain their icons' rather mechanical representation of Christ's Passion, as if it were a merely physical punishment.¹⁰² The quote reflects Hegel's own low estimate of Byzantine culture, with its (allegedly) superficial patina of Christianity. In fact, it is Hegel who might be accused of superficiality here, and even of self-contradiction, for his own remarks on painting's inability to *fully* capture Christ's being, on sculpture's incompletely anthropomorphic 'miracle', and on the ultimate failure of art's finite, sensuous forms to embody the infinity of Absolute Spirit together comprise a Janus-faced aesthetic that bears some resemblance to Neoplatonic theology of the icon, as it both reveals and conceals, embodies and does not embody, the living God. In this, Hegel does not entirely escape Byzantine equivocity towards icons as holy, even *exact* likenesses of God, yet also potentially idolatrous.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Icons' 'direct origin' in mummies' masks: LA 2.871–2 (following Rumohr); cf. Mathews and Muller on possible continuities between early icons, Egyptian pagan panels, and Macedonian tomb-painting (2016). Statuesque figures: 2.850–1.

¹⁰¹ Abstract gold background, 'miracle-working': LA 2.851. Mere craftwork: 2.871. 'Worst of all': 2.851.

¹⁰² LA 2.872.

¹⁰³ For more on Byzantine icons and Neoplatonism, see Michelis 1952, Barasch 1992, Besançon 2000, Alexandrakis and Moutafakis 2002. Besançon argues that the 'Plotinian state of mind' dominated Byzantine art and found 'new life in the aesthetics drawn from Hegel and Schelling' (2000: 50–2). But though Hegel's equivocal absolutization and delimitation of art, as it both reveals and fails to reveal the Idea (~Plotinian One), does make him iconophile and iconoclast at once, he hardly shares the 'aesthetic of the formless' that Besançon attributes to Plotinus, but sharply elevates a 'Classical' aesthetic of crisp, concrete forms above Symbolic indeterminacy and Romantic overdeterminacy. In this context, one might note that Hegel neglects calligraphy and manuscript illumination, so central to Chinese and medieval (Judaic, Christian, Muslim) cultures, as they bring to sensuous presence the Tao or the Word of God: at most he fleetingly compares embellished initial letters and end decorations of medieval manuscripts with the base and volute of Greek columns, rationally necessary to mark off a determinate whole (LA 2.668).

Hegel moves onto firmer ground with the Italian Renaissance. Here the transition from static Byzantine idealism to Umbrian and Venetian realism is standard art-historical fare, but again Hegel places it within his own broader logico-historical system: developments from Cimabue and Duccio to Giotto to Raphael, Correggio, and Titian echo the evolutions from Egyptian symbolism to the Greek Ideal, from static sculpture to naturalistic painting, and even from substance to subject. Thus, after Cimabue, not only do Italian painted figures lose their Byzantine 'sculptural' self-sufficiency, engage in action, and gain relations to each other and to their environment, but they become positively 'dramatic' and thus look forward to Hegel's culminating art-form. At the same time, the Italian paintings combine spiritual serenity with beautiful physical form, and thus hover between opposites, like Psyche hovering between earth and heaven. Several purple passages resound with echoes of the 'beautiful middle' of Hellas, and Hegel positively enthuses over how Italian masters reproduced 'the ideals of antiquity amid those of the modern world'.¹⁰⁴ Here in general, the figures of Italian paintings '*are what they are*, without repentance or desire'¹⁰⁵—like the self-sufficient 'absolutes' of Greek sculpture. More specifically, it is above all the 'classical Umbrians' (Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael) who revived antique beauty, painting 'not ideal divinities but entirely human ideals', and achieving a 'perfect accord' between colour and form, inner character and outer situation, particular naturalistic detail and universal Christian spirit. Such balance gives the figures of a painting like Leonardo's *Last Supper* a 'dignity, grandeur, and nobility' that allows the work to 'meet antiquity on the same ground, without abandoning the character of its own sphere': the echo of Winckelmann is too clear to need flagging.¹⁰⁶ The purplest passages are reserved for Raphael, who translated the 'ideal beauty of antiquity' and its sculptural forms into the different medium of paint and so attained 'the summit of perfection in his art'.¹⁰⁷ Such praise only echoes a common judgment, even the *sensus communis*, that stretches from Reynolds and contemporary academies back to Winckelmann, Castiglione, Vasari, and

¹⁰⁴ 'Dramatic': LA 2.853–4. Spiritual serenity, beautiful form harmonized: 2.873. Psyche, 'ideals of antiquity': 2.875.

¹⁰⁵ LA 2.874.

¹⁰⁶ Umbrians: LA 2.868–9. *Last Supper*: 2.865.

¹⁰⁷ LA 2.881. The passage goes on to praise as 'still greater' Correggio's chiaroscuro, Titian's colouring, but notice how Hegel does not linger on them as he does on Raphael: as with Shakespeare and Aristophanes (2.1236), he dwells on the perfect 'classical' moment rather than its more 'romantic' successor.

Renaissance admirers such as Pietro Bembo, for whom Raphael was 'the most eminent of painters, rival of the ancients'.¹⁰⁸

While the 'classic' beauty of Raphael's figures furnishes Hegel with a standard trope, he offers less obvious analogies between Greek art and Netherlandish painting. From Greek sculpture to Umbrian portraits to Dutch landscapes is a large leap. For Hegel, the links are more dialectical than material: the 'classical' Italian unity of content and form breaks up, both correlatives develop more fully, and eventually re-converge in the virtuoso oil paintings of ships, ports, parlours, processions, pet birds, churches, kitchen-maids, tavern squabbles, battle-scenes, country dances, and all the varied existence of the commercial Low Countries. Anything can be painted, but content matters less than spirited execution, and for Hegel the Dutch Masters' loving attention to all things high and low embodies the ebullient spirit of a newly Protestant people. Trusting in their immediate connection to God, they faced the terrors of the sea and the Spanish with 'courage and intelligence', and so through their own national Calvary won for themselves a deep spiritual joy. Hegel felt this joy seeping through all their paintings, which he praises as 'cheerful, roguish, and comic', filled with 'hilarity', 'cheerfulness', 'comedy'. This is not quite the *Heiterkeit* of the sculptural antique, nor does Hegel explicitly compare Bruegel and Aristophanes, say. Nevertheless, the festive atmosphere of Old Comedy rings through his evocations of the 'heedless boisterousness' of Dutch painting: Aristophanic drama is the Greek *Gesamtkunstwerk*, while the Dutch masters raised painting to its universal potency; both genres make previously 'sculptural' characters (of tragedy and Italian painting, respectively) fully animate and concrete; both exhibit a reverent irreverence at the heroism and follies of experience; both are grounded in cultures defined by a triumphant, somewhat naïve subjectivity—the beautiful *Sittlichkeit* of the Periclean Greeks, the bourgeois honesty of the Calvinist Dutch. In all, the totalizing art of Old Comedy and Dutch genre painting reflect a full reconciliation with the world: 'the Sunday of life which equalizes everything and removes all evil'.¹⁰⁹ The all-redeeming, festive laughter of Aristophanes' heroes is revived in the irrepressible affection with which the Dutch masters celebrated everything in their free northern cities.

¹⁰⁸ In Vasari 1987: I.323; cf. Grafton, Most, and Settis 2010: 802. Winckelmann: 'the noble simplicity and quiet grandeur of Greek statues . . . are the qualities that mark Raphael's particular grandeur, which he obtained by imitating the ancients' (1986 [1755]: 32).

¹⁰⁹ LA 2.887. Dutch *Heiterkeit*, *Fröhlichkeit*, *Rechtlichkeit*, *Ausgelassenheit*, *Komik*: 1.168–9, 2.597–8, 884–7.

Such resonances are not, of course, Hegel's primary target. But they reinforce more explicit judgments about where and when painting found its true vocation. His section on Dutch painting ends with a lament over the relative lack of spiritual depth among painters of his own time. Could his vague gesture towards the 'portraits and historical paintings'¹¹⁰ of the day include the neoclassicism of a Mengs, David, Ingres, or Turner? Of these, only Mengs' painting is mentioned—for criticism.¹¹¹ Elsewhere Hegel notes the use of pagan myth by Raphael, Rubens, and others, the long French fascination with Roman themes, and Goethe's use of Philostratus' *Imagines* to inspire painters to somehow 'imitate' Polygnotus' lost work. Goethe's failure speaks for all such attempts: the mythology and spirit grounding Greek and Roman art 'cannot be recalled to life'.¹¹² Such remarks, along with the Byzantine–Italian–Netherlandish triad at the centre of painting's evolution, suggest that for Hegel neoclassical revivals are inherently anachronistic. The classical Ideal was revived in Christian form by Raphael and the Umbrians—but never by *direct* imitation of outworn pagan content.

3.2.4. Music

Despite its gaps and generalizing tone, Hegel's account of painting remains an impressive synthesis.¹¹³ It understands painting in essentialist terms, distinguishing it from and suggesting its inner relations to the other four arts: not only as the 'truth' of sculpture and indeed of architecture, as paintings fill temples, theatres, and churches, in the form of mosaics, frescos, stained glass, altar-pieces, and stage painting; but also a rival to poetry, able to tell stories (like epic), express moods (lyric), and evoke an entire world of experience (drama), with the result that Horace's motto 'like a picture is poetry' (*ut pictura poesis*) has ever been a 'favourite saying often insisted on especially by theorists'.¹¹⁴ Remarkably, however, Hegel's schema stresses painting's dialectical relationship with music: opposites and twins, as the quintessential art-forms of Romantic subjectivity. Historically, then, his account of the Venetian and Dutch masters precedes that of Italian and

¹¹⁰ LA 2.887.

¹¹¹ LA 1.294 (the 'Muses in the Villa Albani' breaks rules of generic 'style'), 2.844.

¹¹² LA 2.814–15; cf. 1.272, 1.275, 2.860.

¹¹³ 'One of the most profound philosophical meditations on the nature of painting we have', unjustly neglected by art historians (so Houlgate 2000: 61).

¹¹⁴ LA 2.855.

German music, while 'logically' the thoroughly blended colours of carnation approximate the seamless blendings of sound: each colour blends invisibly with the next as moments of a continuous canvas, while each note becomes properly musical only as a drop within the rolling waves of harmony and melody. Hegel's analysis is thus totally opposed to Kandinsky's 'jumping spots' separated by white, or Schoenberg's *Klangfarbenmelodie*—each note suspended in clanging abstraction from others. For Hegel, Romantic painting and music are quintessentially modern, *not* because they are abstract (architecture and sculpture are the 'abstract' arts), but because they press on to complex unities expressive of the most *concrete* human experience.¹¹⁵ The seemingly limitless range of painting had inspired Leonardo to make it the 'universal' art, but critics in Hegel's Germany were beginning to champion music for this honour. Suggestions to this effect by Herder, Goethe, and Richter were knit together in E.T.A. Hoffmann's 1810 essay that influentially placed instrumental music at the pinnacle of Romantic art, with Beethoven its most sublime practitioner.¹¹⁶

It was out of this Romantic worship of Beethoven that Wagner would coin the term 'absolute music',¹¹⁷ a term that ostensibly has a Hegelian ring. Hegel does indeed suggest an 'absolute' content to music, in that for him the regularity of musical beats expresses the soul's own unity-through-difference, while music itself captures the Concept that unifies all time and being.¹¹⁸ Yet the depth of that absolute content is hardly touched in purely instrumental music, which he belittles as if it were some strange fad that could appeal only to cloistered, technically skilled enthusiasts.¹¹⁹ Such music offends against the aesthetic need for spontaneity, appeals abstractly to the ear alone, and can stimulate little aesthetic thought. For his sense that 'absolute music' is abstract and therefore primitive, Hegel looks for confirmation from myths of Orpheus, now interpreted as a lyre virtuoso: 'his notes and their movement sufficed for wild beasts ... but not for men who demanded the contents of a higher doctrine'. That higher content would

¹¹⁵ Painting and music: *LA* 2.848, 2.853, 2.895; cf. 1.599–600 (colour as 'objective music') and Schelling's notion of drawing as the 'rhythm of painting' (cited in Houlgate 2000: 70).

¹¹⁶ Painting as universal art: Leonardo, *Trattato della pittura*. Hoffmann's review: see Dahlaus 1983, Bonds 2006: 6–10, Donelan 2008: 88; text in Uerling 2000: 285–94, with slightly later version in Strunk 1950: 775–81.

¹¹⁷ See Dahlhaus 1991: 18; Bonds 2014: 1–2, 131.

¹¹⁸ E.g. *LA* 1.249.

¹¹⁹ *LA* 2.899; cf. 2.953–4, Speight 2008: 111.

arrive eventually when music generated words, in the so-called Orphic Hymns.¹²⁰

Hegel's 'Orpheus' reflects his broader thesis that music gains universal appeal only when its expressive power spills over into articulate words. Echoing a hypothesis of Rousseau, and ultimately Aristotle, that music arises as imitation of voice tones, Hegel takes the singing voice as music's first and last mode: a natural immediacy (for all peoples sing) and the mode capable of the most intricate expression.¹²¹ The human voice is thus to music what the bodily form is to (Greek) sculpture, and flesh-tones are to (Christian) painting. One might expect from such a prelude that Hegel would latch onto Aristophanes' description of the Athenians as a 'song-loving people' (*philaloidon genos*):¹²² did not reverence for Apollo, Dionysus, Pan, Orpheus, Musaeus, and the Muses place music at the centre of the Greeks' aesthetic life? Hegel does partially acknowledge this in his discussion of lyric poetry. Yet with regard to *sung* poetry, his Greeks were too subjectively shallow to progress beyond monodic music in their lyric choruses. Polyphony would be a product of the later, more developed Christian soul—and so, while all peoples do sing, music would develop in its complexity out of the complex interiority fostered by Christian culture. Such reasoning may also partly explain Hegel's somewhat clichéd praise of the Italians as *the* singing people, *the* people of music: theirs is a naturally musical language, and their accents spill over into musical virtuosity of all types, culminating in traditions of *bel canto* and opera.¹²³ And what else could explain—and what other people could have produced that *maestro di tutti maestri*: Rossini, the sheer joy and vivacity of whose arias are the *ne plus ultra* of sound? Hegel's lectures do not name any single 'classical' centre of music, yet his admiration of Rossini was well known. If music reaches its 'zenith' in Christian, and specifically *Italian* modernity, one wonders whether the Hegelian Absolute sounds through Rossini's light operas most particularly?¹²⁴ If Schumann praised Mozart's

¹²⁰ Orpheus: LA 2.908. Orpheus was ever symbolic of music's power (Bonds 2014); Hoffmann adds the Romantic note that 'The lyre of Orpheus opened the portals of Orcus', i.e. the infinite depths of spirit (Strunk 1950: 775). Paganini (1782–1840) was nicknamed the 'modern Orpheus', was received rapturously during his four-month stay in Berlin in 1829, but is neglected by Hegel, even in the context of modern virtuoso composers (2.956–7).

¹²¹ Aristotle *De Anima* 420b5–6; cf. Democritus D.-K. B154 with Halliwell 2002: 153–4 n.5.
¹²² *Frogs* 240.

¹²³ Musical Italians: LA 1.284–5 (modern Greeks too 'are even now a people of poetry and songs'), 2.922; cf. LH 431.

¹²⁴ No real 'classical' centre: Bungay 1984: 133–4. Musical 'zenith': 2.977. On Hegel's delight in Rossini (e.g. 2.949, 2.957), and Hotho's editorial attempt to veil Hegel's 'middlebrow' tastes, see Sallis 2011: 370–3. Rossini and Beethoven were contemporary symbols of operatic and

40th Symphony for its 'Grecian lightness and grace', could one imagine Hegel praising Rossini (the 'Italian Mozart') for the same qualities, and hearing replayed in his arias 'the ideals of antiquity amid those of the modern world'?

That Hegel in *LA* does *not* go so far as to pretend to have actually heard 'Grecian' music reflects his keen awareness that music is the art of *modern* subjectivity. His was indeed a time of unparalleled musical genius: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert were near or exact contemporaries, Mendelssohn was a student and acquaintance, and Hegel attended his revival of Bach's St Matthew Passion in 1829. Hegel may well then be forgiven for not considering music to be a *forte* of the ancient world.¹²⁵ Little still is firmly known about Greek or Roman music, and of what was known then, Hegel knew even less. His sources could have included the major literary and philosophical works, filtered through Montesquieu and Rousseau.¹²⁶ But specialized studies were rare; the Herculeaneum papyri containing Philodemus' *On Music* were published in 1793, but go unquoted by Hegel, while the Delphi inscription on Greek music would not be discovered until 1893. Perhaps most significant is his omission of the Greek conviction that the soul is educated in *mousikē*, that the different musical modes have their ethical and political ramifications, and that music has a 'magic' and 'divine' power to lift the soul to its greatest heights: an idea that accords with Hegel's own view of song, as well as with the intoxicating enthusiasm for Beethoven.¹²⁷ The dichotomy between the lyre and *aulos*, Apolline nomes and Dionysian dithyrambs, and between the controlled,

'absolute' music, respectively (Dahlhaus 1983, Donelan 2008: 87–90): to praise one was often tantamount to rejecting the other.

¹²⁵ Contrast West on the Greeks: 'Probably no other people in history has made more frequent reference to music and musical activity in its literature and art' (1992: 1).

¹²⁶ For representative passages on music from Plato to Boethius, see Strunk 1950: 3–100. Montesquieu reflects that the Greek republics would have become societies of 'wrestlers and boxers', had their legislators not introduced music as a civilizing force (*Spirit of the Laws*, IV.8); Plato, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Plutarch, and 'all the ancients' agree that music is the fundament of law, and cannot be changed without revolutionizing society—the theme of Anderson 1966, and one implicit in Hegel's theory that national 'spirits' have each their distinctive art-form. Perhaps his most detailed discussion of ancient 'music' concerns the Pythagorean 'music of the spheres' (*LP* 2.230).

¹²⁷ The declaration of faith attributed to Beethoven clothes Kantian aesthetic themes in ancient imagery: '... music is a higher revelation than all wisdom and philosophy; it is the wine which arouses to new creations, and I am the Bacchus who presses this glorious wine for men and makes them spiritually drunk... Music, verily, is the mediator between intellectual and sensuous life' (Bettina Brentano to Goethe, 28 May 1810, cited in Sullivan 1960: 3–4).

proto-Classical and the wild, proto-Romantic styles—so celebrated after Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*—is not an important one for Hegel's discussion of music. These styles do, however, shape his discussion of poetry, and it is here that he does treat ancient music, if only obliquely, as melody becomes ancillary to the articulated word.

3.2.5. Poetry

'A perfect sensuous utterance': Baumgarten's definition of a poem¹²⁸ underlies Hegel's understanding of poetry as the 'universal' art, at once the basis and end of the others. The word *poësis* itself connotes imaginative 'making' in matter, and so 'the poetic' becomes shorthand for the imaginative element that 'belongs equally to all the art-forms', and whose decline sees the emergence of 'the prosaic' with its bare matter-of-fact. The earliest peoples spoke a poetical language, rooted in a 'substantial unity of outlook' that blended universal and particular seamlessly, before separated by prosaic *Verstand*. Poetry is the most widespread of the arts, its subject matter most inclusive, its capacities most unrestricted: it can treat external events, inner feelings, and their interrelations; it can erect great facades, sculpt character, paint a portrait or landscape, sing the heart's moods, evoke single moments and unfold whole sequences, and depict evil and suffering as the other arts cannot.¹²⁹ It marries the fixed determinacy of the visual arts with the temporal flow of music, and so becomes the 'total art' which 'repeats in its own field the modes of presentation characteristic of the other arts'.¹³⁰ In particular, epic revisits painting's narrative power, lyric the expressivity of music, while drama populates a theatrical space with its array of 'sculptural' characters. With musical words as its medium, poetry speaks most directly to the imagination about war, love, honour, deity, destiny—substantial

¹²⁸ *Oratio sensitiva perfecta est poema (Meditationes Philosophicae §9 (1735); in Gilbert and Kuhn 1939: 289).*

¹²⁹ 'Poetic' as shorthand for imagination, 'prosaic' for the unartistic *Verstand*: esp. *LA* 2.971–9. As 'the universal art which belongs equally to all the art-forms: 2.796; cf. Plato *Symposium* 205b–c on *poësis* as generalized 'making'. Poetry older than 'skilfully elaborated prosaic speech': 2.973, a rich paragraph, recalling Hamann and Herder for whom 'poetry is the mother-tongue of the human race' (cited in Gilbert and Kuhn 1939: 314); and echoing Hölderlin's 1795 notion of Being before the original *Urteil*. Poetry most widespread: 1.285—especially lyric (2.1113–14).

¹³⁰ *LA* 1.627; cf. 1.89, 2.796, 2.967. In this near identification of *poetry* with art, Hegel ranks alongside Romantics like F. Schlegel, rather than with Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, or Walter Pater, who privilege music.

things. In doing so, poetry is never allegory. For though poets express the spirit of their people, any general ideas are *felt* through the images and word-music rather than consciously thought.¹³¹ A poem is a product of *sensuous* thinking, where thought is so thoroughly blended with words and images that it cannot be abstracted from them as a conceptual formula, without killing the poetic beauty.

Yet if Hegel refuses, Kantian-wise, to fully conceptualize poetry, he will nevertheless discern an *ideal unity* deep within it: a poem is a perfect sensuous manifestation of the Idea, and the UPI dialectic so pervasive in *LA* becomes most prominent in the analysis of poetic genres. In 1819, Goethe named epic, lyric, and drama as the three 'natural' forms of poetry, with drama marrying epic's objectivity to lyric's intense, subjective feeling.¹³² In Hegel's hands, Goethe's *Urformen* become logical moments in the 'concept' of poetry, itself structured by the dialectic of the Concept. First, any individual poem will see some guiding *universal* (e.g. epic action, lyric emotion, tragic conflict) differentiate itself into a range of *particular* details (e.g. scenarios, images, personae, speeches, actions), each of which is so skilfully handled that they resonate with all others as *individual* reflections of the universal permeating them. Again, as genres, epic (universal, objective) and lyric (particular, subjective) look forward to their synthesis in the 'total art' of drama. At the same time, the inner 'logic' of these timeless genres anticipates poetic history—the Greek case above all. Goethe's *Urformen* are essentially abstracted from Greek literary history, as it is typically understood to progress from early epic to the Archaic 'Age of Lyric' to Classical drama.¹³³ Moreover, in Hegel's hands, the classical 'Ideal' ensures that Homer, Pindar, Sophocles, and Aristophanes become

¹³¹ Poetry not allegorical: *LA* 1.51–2, 2.971–1034.

¹³² Goethe's 'Naturformen der Poesie' (in *Noten und Abhandlungen zum Westöstlichen Divan*) has become the 'undisputed basis for most generic classifications of literature' with 'an almost world-wide relevance' (W. Wolf 2005: 21–56; cf. Budelmann 2009: 3; Duff 2014: 3). Goethe's classification, in turn, had a partial precursor in Batteux's *Les Beaux-Arts Réduits à un Même Principe* (1746). Plato and Aristotle inaugurate the tradition of juxtaposing poetic forms: e.g. Homer is the most 'tragic' poet (e.g. *Republic* 595c, 607a, *Theaetetus* 152e) or the epic originator of both tragedy and comedy (*Poetics* 4); drama as more complete poetic form, uniting narration and plot (*mythos*), lyric *melē*, dialogue, characterization, song, spectacle (esp. *Poetics* 6).

¹³³ For Miller, this 'standard narrative of Greek literary history'—championed by Jaeger, Snell, H. Fränkel, and influential on G. Lukács, among others—is fundamentally Hegelian (1994: 10–11). But in himself seeking 'to turn Hegel on his head' by embedding concepts of genre 'in the social world of their becoming', Miller makes only a general gesture towards PS and seems unaware of the deeply historical dimension of poetic genres for Hegel. 'Age of Lyric': Burn 1960.

the exemplars in their genres, receiving more unqualified praise than ‘Romantics’ like Klopstock, Schiller, and even Shakespeare and Goethe. Above all, it is in the Athenian theatre that poetry fulfils its ‘vocation’ as the universal art, uniting architectural space, sculptural character, scene-painting, lyric song, and epic action in an organic fusion of all the major art-forms. In this sense, Sophocles’ *Antigone* may have been for Hegel the perfect sensuous utterance. But he has much to say about other ancient dramas also, while his extensive remarks on ancient epic and lyric have been quite neglected, despite their intrinsic interest.

3.2.5.1. Epic

Objective totality might be taken as the watchword for epic as Hegel understands it.¹³⁴ Epic narrates deeds—the objective deeds of heroes who embody the character of their nation—and in describing the situations and scenarios surrounding those representative deeds, epic evokes a whole world. Mountains, rivers, plains, the sea, cities, and all human complexity enter into the expansive tale, and Hegel can find no better exemplar of epic universality than the *Odyssey* as it ranges from Eumaeus’ hut to the Phaeacians’ exotic isle. The *Iliad* too evokes the whole Greek world, when for example the Shield of Achilles captures ‘the whole sphere of the earth and human life, weddings, legal actions, agriculture, herds, etc., private wars between cities . . . a description not to be regarded as an external parergon’.¹³⁵ As he reaches out to populate his universe with the finest details, the Homeric poet lingers attentively on each particular, not judging or reflecting, but simply naming them with the matter-of-fact tone and ‘form of objectivity’ that for Hegel and most readers has been the ‘true fundamental character of epic proper’.¹³⁶ He therefore admonishes modern readers not to skip as tedious or as ‘small beer’ those Homeric descriptions of clothing, jewellery, weapons, the games, combats, feasts, the sunrise, sacrifices. Such passages reflect the naïve realism of early peoples who lived closer to nature and worked to directly satisfy their needs, for they had no markets, not

¹³⁴ The relatively sparse literature on Hegel on epic includes Lee 1981, Dunshirn 2004, Dentith 2006: 106–11, Foster 2010: 34–49, James 2011: 25–30, W.D. Desmond 2011b; cf. Bakhtin 1981 [1941], Stace 1955: §§702–5.

¹³⁵ LA 2.1055.

¹³⁶ ‘Form of objectivity’: LA 2.1082. ‘Fundamental character’: 2.1051. That the Homeric mind is ‘objective’ was a commonplace, shared by e.g. Goethe, Schiller, the Schlegels, Coleridge (‘There is no subjectivity in Homer’: *Table Talk*, 12 May 1830), Snell (1953: ix); ‘prevalent until recently’ (Janko 1994: 3), it has been amended in e.g. (Griffin 1976, de Jong 1992).

much specialized labour—and little complex interiority.¹³⁷ When a hero is angry or afraid, therefore, the epic poet simply states the fact objectively, without elaboration. Such objective naïveté transposes into art the discrete facticity of nature. The paratactic style of nature (as one might call it) is carried over into the way early epic *juxtaposes* distinct entities: separate, complete hexameter lines; proud, independent heroes and gods, each jealous of rank and honour; self-contained episodes and descriptions which are not deeply interwoven; and, most of all, narrative events that seem to simply happen, one after another.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, behind this façade of discrete particulars lurks the power of Fate, indeterminate, yet determining all things with a sense of tragic inevitability.

That inner unity, Hegel implies, escaped Wolf and his followers. Misled by the paratactic style of primitive or natural epic, they postulated that the Homeric poems began as so many short oral sagas, to be 'stitched together' by later, literate editors. Hegel acknowledges the premise that tradition, a folk spirit, and individual heroic ballads ground the emergence of an epic. But a ground is not a sufficient cause—'it is only individuals who can write poetry, a nation collectively cannot'—and the Wolfian assumption that Homer 'never existed and that single pieces were produced by single hands and then assembled together to form these two great works' is 'excessively crude', indeed 'a barbaric idea at variance with the nature of art'.¹³⁹ This aesthetic critique of the emerging school of Homeric analysis would be ignored by Lachmann, Schadewaldt, Pestalozzi, and others, who might have scorned Hegel for regressing to Aristotle's more unitarian approach. For Aristotle, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* tower over the episodic Cyclic poems because of their controlled focus on the wrath of Achilles, the character of Odysseus.¹⁴⁰

Such unifying themes become in Hegel's dialectical treatment at once tighter and more expansive: concrete universals that particularize themselves into individual situations, scenarios, characters, and actions—each uniquely reflecting and developing the overall theme. Thus, in the *Iliad*, Achilles' wrath should be 'kept firmly in view and adduced as the support

¹³⁷ Descriptions, immediacy of life, 'small beer': LA 2.1054–5; cf. LH 241.

¹³⁸ Hegel's understanding of nature (in his *EPS* triad) may thus provide some grounding for the commonplace that Homer was a 'genius of nature'. On Archaic *parataxis* and *lexis eiromenē*, see e.g. Immerwahr 1969: 46–7 (with references); the terms *parataxis* and *syntaxis* were first formulated in Hegel's time—in the 1826 *Griechische Grammatik* of F. von Thiersch, 'preceptor of Bavaria' (Scaglione 1981: 7, 11).

¹³⁹ LA 2.1049–50, 2.1087.

¹⁴⁰ Aristotle *Poetics* 8.1451a16–35; cf. LA 2.1088.

that holds the whole narrative together': the proem, Achilles' isolation, Patroclus' death and funeral games, the reconciliation with Priam, Hector's burial, and (one might add) the Catalogue, Shield, and other seeming insertions all do in fact have their bearing on the wrath of Achilles.¹⁴¹ More specifically, Hegel strives to name the 'logical' moments of epic: a 'necessary and self-grounded' content, which expresses a nation's character in some foundational event, like a war (U)—evolves a rich profusion of scenarios, incidents, and characters (P), each of which are so interwoven with the central theme that they become integral, seemingly necessary parts of the whole (I). This dialectical analysis would accomplish several things: make epic another instance of the Ideal, at once distinct from and 'identical' with other art-forms; develop the Aristotelian affirmation of the organic unity of the Homeric epics; and so justify Hegel's claim that Homer's poems are particularly 'true' to the 'concept' and genre of epic.

Moreover, it offers a hermeneutic approach that is far from 'dead', and arguably far more resonant with Homer's rich tapestry than is Wolfian analysis. One meditation on Achilles illustrates Hegel's sensitivity to the 'inexhaustible reflections' afforded by Homer's characters:

In Homer, e.g., every hero is a whole range of qualities and characteristics, full of life. Achilles is the most youthful hero, but his youthful force does not lack the other genuinely human qualities, and Homer unveils this many-sidedness to us in the most varied situations. Achilles loves his mother, Thetis; he weeps for Briseis because she is snatched from him, and his mortified honour drives him to the quarrel with Agamemnon, which is the point of departure for all the further events in the *Iliad*. In addition he is the truest friend of Patroclus and Antilochus, at the same time the most glowing fiery youth, swift of foot, brave, but full of respect for the aged. The faithful Phoenix, his trusted attendant, is at his feet, and, at the funeral of Patroclus, he gives to old Nestor the highest respect and honour. But, even so, Achilles also shows himself irascible, irritable, revengeful, and full of the harshest cruelty to the enemy, as when he binds the slain Hector to his chariot, drives on, and so drags the corpse three times round the walls of Troy. And yet he is mollified when old Priam comes to him in his tent; he bethinks himself of his own old father at home and gives to the weeping King the hand which had slain his son. Of

¹⁴¹ LA 2.1089–90.

Achilles we may say: *here is a man; the many-sidedness of noble human nature develops its whole richness in this one individual*. And the same is true of the other Homeric characters—Odysseus, Diomedes, Ajax, Agamemnon, Hector, Andromache; *each of them is a whole, a world in itself; each is a complete living human being and not at all only the allegorical abstraction of some isolated trait of character*. How pale and trumpy in comparison, even if they are powerful individualities, are the horny Siegfried, Hagen of Troy, and even Volker the minstrel!¹⁴²

The passage may recall Goethe's admiration for Homeric characters as supreme human types—and, more specifically still, Jean Paul Richter's argument that the poet's universal genius finds its highest vocation in producing 'symbolic individualities', which (like Leibnizian monads) synthesize and evoke all human possibilities from one perspective.¹⁴³ Hegel prefers to call them 'classic' as they mediate between stock types (e.g. angry warrior) and complex Romantic personalities. In this 'beautiful middle' such characters have the power (like Kant's 'aesthetic ideas') to stimulate the imagination and understanding to endless contemplation. Hence each is inexhaustible, a 'world in itself', the subjective correlate of an entire world-situation: they are bearers of cultural universals, in whom the *substance* of their people has become immediately *subjective*. Such many-sided characters require 'the greatest variety of scenes and situations', i.e. a vast epic, to be manifested fully. And as forceful personalities, they dominate their world and poem. Their actions affect everyone else, as when Greek and Trojan fortunes ebb and flow with Achilles' mood. Indeed, 'the chief right of these great characters consists in the energy of their self-accomplishment': they can, do, and even should assert themselves over others. When faced with the aggression of an Achilles, 'moral pedants' may scold him 'as if he were a schoolboy', but they miss the point—the tremendous reality of these heroic absolutes: 'The point is that Achilles is the man that he *is*, and with that, so far as epic goes, the matter is at an end'.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² LA 1.236–7, italics added. 'Inexhaustible reflections': 2.1083; Hegel's approach is thus not incompatible with Griffin's exploration of the 'complexity' of Homer's characters (1983: 50–80).

¹⁴³ See Gilbert and Kuhn 1939: 383–5; cf. Donlan 1970 (Homer 'consciously' created 'truly individual characters who were also universal symbols') and Bernadete 1963: 1 (Achilles 'holds within himself all the heroic virtues that are given singly to others').

¹⁴⁴ 'Variety of scenes': LA 2.1067. Rights of heroic 'self-accomplishment': 2.1068. The latter idea links Achilles with heroes, state-founders, and world-historical individuals, whose passionate or seemingly irrational violence draws in fact on the deeper 'right' of the Idea to develop itself (e.g. PR §§93, 350; cf. LA 1.185–6).

Though Hegel's Odysseus is also an embodiment of Greek civilization, Hegel's chief fascination is with Achilles: the handsome, impetuous youth in whom is incarnated the short-lived beauty and spontaneity of the Greek world. Achilles is beautiful (*Iliad* 2.673–5) and for Hegel he therefore inhabits an art-form with its own distinctive beauty, especially in its Homeric exemplifications. Most basically, the hexameter is beautiful as it transforms sounds into a 'tranquilly rolling stream' of words, perfectly adapted to epic's all-inclusive content and objective tone.¹⁴⁵ Individual passages of the *Iliad* are beautiful: the beginning has the 'most beautiful clarity' as it evokes a whole world through the clash of Achilles and Agamemnon; the farewell of Hector and Andromache, smiling through their tears, is quoted as 'one of the most beautiful things that epic poetry can ever provide'; the ending too is 'most beautiful and satisfying'. Epic characters are 'humanly beautiful' because they are the quintessence of their people: the Ideal in miniature.¹⁴⁶ Hegel does not comb through the *Iliad* to explore its intricate beauties systematically, but, in his partial defence, one can gesture towards all those Iliadic passages that speak to the tragedy of beauty, threatened with death on all sides: Achilles is the most beautiful of those who went to Troy and his fate is evoked whenever a warrior falls like some cut poppy or poplar and dies his 'beautiful death'.¹⁴⁷ In such ways one could bolster Hegel's somewhat more *a priori* formula about epics emerging in the 'beautiful middle' periods of national histories, when peoples live between nature and spirit—namely, between primitive pastoral and fully articulated society, when cultural universals are embodied in individuals and customs but are not yet fixed in objective laws and codes, and when, more

¹⁴⁵ LA 2.1020, 2.1136.

¹⁴⁶ Beginning: LA 2.1081. Hector, Andromache: 2.1083. Ending: 2.1090. Characters: 2.1068.

¹⁴⁷ Homer eschews gruesome maimings and lingering deaths (Vernant 1982), and attends to beauty in its disparate manifestations: song (*Iliad* 1.473, 18.570), Agamemnon's cloak (2.43) and kingly stature (3.169), chariots (5.194), chariot yokes (5.730), prize-swords (23.808), the skin of a deity or warrior (e.g. 5.354, 22.321), orchards and wheat-fields (6.195, 12.314, 20.185), serving-baskets (9.217, 24.626), chairs (14.238, 17.390), cauldrons (23.268), cups (24.101, 24.429), cloaks (24.588), stone wash-basins (22.154), an olive sapling (17.55), the walls of Troy (21.447). Helen is beautiful, as are Paris (3.44–55) and the Trojan women (22.155), while Hellas is the land 'of beautiful women' (e.g. 2.683). Most proto-Hegelian is the Shield of Achilles, praised repeatedly as beautiful (19.379–80, 22.314): in its arrangement of cosmic and human scenes from Earth and Heaven ('abstract' naturalistic divinities) to the particularities of weddings, courts, wars, farming, herding, and dancing, the Shield might be seen by an Hegelian enthusiast as having the UPI structure of an ideally 'sensuous utterance'. Dunshirn 2004 develops a Hegelian reading of the *Iliad* (from *PS* and *LA*), stressing tragic categories like *Schuld*, more than Hegel's logic and world history as I do here.

abstractly, the spirit of the nation is manifest in immediate sensuous forms.¹⁴⁸

Reflections on the 'beauty' of Achilles and epic recall the larger context for Hegel's understanding of the genre: not tragedy, or even poetry, but the logico-historical whole which art-works conjure to sensuous immediacy. Epic is 'beautiful' to the degree that it sensuously reveals the Idea, and one aspect of this revelation is negativity and its resolution. Dialectical strife is the father of all things (to paraphrase Heraclitus), and what is logically prefigured as contradiction is represented in epic as war and struggle; where logic resolves contradictions in abstract unities, epic poems of war reconcile us to its human necessity. More concretely, war is (for Hegel) a necessary means of progress, and on the *Schlachtbank* of history, many individuals and nations are sacrificed for the higher realization of a national and Absolute Spirit. The fact that war is the typical stuff of epic is therefore not accidental, but

on the contrary, by being grounded in a higher necessity it is something absolute in itself, even if the direct external occasion for it may assume the character of some single violation or of revenge. An analogue of this situation is to be found in the *Ramayana*, but it arises above all in the *Iliad* where the Greeks take the field against the Asiatics and thereby fight the first epic battles in the tremendous opposition that led to the wars which constitute in Greek history a turning-point in world-history. In a similar way, the Cid fights against the Moors; in Tasso and Ariosto the Christians fight against the Saracens, in Camoens the Portuguese against the Indians... *We are made completely at peace by the world-historically justified victory of the higher principle over the lower which succumbs to a bravery that leaves nothing over for the defeated.* In this sense, the epics of the past describe the triumph of the West over the East, of European moderation, and the individual beauty of a reason that sets limits to itself, over Asiatic brilliance and over the magnificence of a patriarchal unity still devoid of perfect articulation or bound together so abstractly that it collapses into parts separate from one another.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ 'Beautiful middle': LA 2.1043, 2.1053, 2.1056, 2.1073, and 2.1098–9.

¹⁴⁹ LA 2.1062 (italics added). The passage anticipates later nineteenth-century use of Homer to bolster European national identities vis-à-vis the 'barbaric' Orient, and specifically the Ottoman Empire (den Boer 2004; Uslu 2017: 20–3).

With regard to the *Iliad*, specifically, Hegel reworks the typical Classical interpretation that Achilles and Agamemnon led the united Hellenes in a national victory over Oriental despotism: for Classical Greeks themselves, this first seemingly Panhellenic victory over Asia echoed the Titanomachy, Amazonomachy, and Centauromachy, and was later invoked by Alexander, Trajan, and other conquerors of the 'barbarian' East, even down to Hegel's own time, when in the 1820s the patriot Theódoros Kolokotronis 'would dress and parade as the new Achilles when ridding Greece of the Turks'.¹⁵⁰ Hegel associates Achilles specifically with Alexander (that second personification of Greek beauty and world-historical violence), such that his ultimate focus is not the 'tragic' death of a young warrior, but how the *pathos* of his wrath is means for a deeper reconciliation. The mythic victory at Troy thus becomes paradigmatic for the historical extension of Greek (and therefore European) rationality over the 'Oriental world' from Asia Minor to India. This interpretation is as old as Herodotus and had indeed passed into the mainstream of European legend: not for Hegel (or for his many forebears), Homer's more profound reticence about all that ferocity at Troy—the killing of Lycaon, mutilation of Hector, and the fate facing the Trojans at the end of that 'total war'.

A large exception to the somewhat complacent 'Hegelian' consensus is Virgil, who reworks Homer's Achilles into his Aeneas, and whose *Aeneid* (especially the 'Iliadic' books 7–12) meditates darkly on the suffering, injustice, and *furor* that went into the founding of the Roman world. Hegel (like many German contemporaries) is fairly blind to Virgil's accomplishment, and weaves a limited but internally consistent theory to justify the by-then dominant denigration of Virgil as a mere imitator, even a plagiarist: primitive or natural epics like the *Iliad* (he argues) are truer to the genre itself, more in tune with the 'beautiful middle' between barbarism and civilization, and are to be preferred to later, self-consciously literary epics like the *Aeneid*; the Romans, legalistic and prosaic, were not an aesthetic people, and so the Roman Virgil could at best only borrow from his great Greek predecessor, to produce a poem that is more polished, but far less spontaneous, honest, and forceful; indeed, as an imitation of a foreign work, the *Aeneid* does not quite express the *Roman* spirit—except

¹⁵⁰ Lane Fox 1997: 48. Trojan War as first victory over 'Asia': e.g. Herodotus 1.4, Lysias 24.181–2.

as quasi-allegorical propaganda for the Augustan regime.¹⁵¹ Other candidates also fall short: Hegel rejects Niebuhr's attempts to find epic material in Livy's legends of early Rome; Lucan's content is not wholly appropriate for the genre; 'even Ennius drew on Greek sources and then made mythology prosaic'. Hegel does not touch on Naevius' *Punic Wars* (certainly Roman in its content and Saturnian metre) or the efforts of Statius, Silius Italicus, Valerius Flaccus. In all, a blend of insight, *a priori* construction, and oversight places his Romans among those world-historical peoples without a true epic poem of their own.¹⁵²

For those nations that do have them, however, primitive epics constitute 'poetic' and 'national bibles', the objective expressions of their character. A series of such primitive epics would, in turn, constitute 'a gallery of the spirits of peoples'—material for a 'great natural history of the spirit' itself.¹⁵³ But if the ideality of a statue may be taken in in a glance, the vaster unity of epic demands greater mental effort, a more philosophical mediation. Conversely, it is the truly philosophical mind that can appreciate individual epics in their difference and identity. Indeed, it can recognize the inner identity of epic art and philosophical dialectic, and begin to locate past epics as moments within the 'absolute epic' of world-history itself. If such a philosophical epic were actually composed, it would take the 'entire earth' as its geographical world-situation, Spirit as its world-hero—that is, 'the

¹⁵¹ Reflecting the eighteenth-century dethroning of Virgil as the great epic poet in German minds (Atherton 2006), Hegel's assessment of Virgil's epic is a 'slavish' and 'lifeless' copy took shape as early as the *Differenzschrift* (1977: 89) and recurs through the Berlin lectures: e.g. *LA* 2.1073–5, *LR* 2.503–4 (1824), *LH* 293. Yet aspects of Hegel's Rome could accommodate Virgil's Aeneas as the true representative of 'the Roman mind': the eastern exile who injects the Oriental and Greek worlds into the new foundation of Rome, and to this great enterprise ever submits his merely personal inclinations; a half-classical, half-modern hero, pious and dedicated to a heteronomous divine will, yet also acutely self-reflective, prey to doubts, and even a figure of Hegelian conscience whose soul wavers between good and evil (e.g. *Aeneid* 4.437–49); Klinger's thesis that Virgil's epic style reconciles 'the maximum of freedom with the maximum of order' (Conte 1994: 281) has a potentially Hegelian ring. On the other hand, Hegel may dispraise Virgil only in relation to Homer, if the *Aeneid* is indeed 'the finest example' of 'the artistic epic proper' (2.1099). Literary epics do not quite capture the living spirit of their people: 2.1045.

¹⁵² Niebuhr: *LA* 2.1099; cf. *EM* §549. Lucan: *LA* 2.1161. Ennius: 2.514. No Chinese epic: 2.1095. The Old Testament contains 'elements of primitive epic poetry' but not 'epic proper': 2.1096.

¹⁵³ 'Bibles' and 'gallery': *LA* 2.1045; cf. *LH* 418 (Luther's Bible as a 'People's Book'). 'History of spirit': 2.1077, cf. 2.1094. The epics or epic-like works that Hegel discusses track his sense of world-history's progression: the Indian *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, Hebrew Old Testament, Greek *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Germanic *Nibelungenlied* and Icelandic sagas, medieval *Chansons de Geste*, *Song of Roland*, *El Cid*, the more literary *Jerusalem Liberated* and *Lusiads*, and *Don Quixote*, comic and prosaic conclusion to the 'Romantic' epic tradition. The thesis that epics appear in the early period when a people's character is being forged fits the Greek case best, and Hegel is right to regard Homer as the *fons et origo* of historical Greek culture (*LA* 2.1056).

spirit of man, or humanity’—and ‘world-history itself’ as its central event or action. Played out on the ‘battlefield of the universal spirit’, this would be a tale of heroic humanity as it struggles with itself from earliest China to the French Revolution.¹⁵⁴ And yet, even while pondering the possibility of such an epic of epics, Hegel dismisses it—perhaps somewhat ruefully? It cannot be done artistically, he concludes: the world-situation of the entire earth cannot be represented sensuously any more than Kant’s Idea of the World; its hero, Spirit, can be grasped only in self-reflective, prosaic thought, and could at best be represented symbolically through a ‘succession of really world-historical figures’. The *LH* does offer a series of such figures in Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and Napoleon, but less as vivid personalities than allegorical instances of the ‘cunning of Reason’. Finally, the ‘battleground of the universal spirit’ would see the clash not of champions and phalanxes but soundless categories and perspectives. And so, though the gallery of epic bibles provides material for a more integrated philosophical history, this history cannot revive the epic form itself. If it could be sung, such a history might constitute an epic of epics. But it cannot: the very universality of its contents ensures that the ‘last and greatest work of mankind’ will not be a global epic.

3.2.5.2. Lyric

In Hegel’s triad of poetic forms, lyric is bound to epic as its dialectical opposite and twin. Epics are long, lyrics short. Epics tend to celebrate a glorious past of a whole people, lyrics the present experiences of an individual.¹⁵⁵ Epics narrate the objective deeds of gods and heroes with just *one* metre—the expansive hexameter; lyric adopts an *endless* array of expressive metres and forms to match the ‘incalculable variety’ of subjective moods, feelings, and ideas.¹⁵⁶ Epic juxtaposes discrete phenomena in the panorama of a verbal space; lyric evokes feelings as they emerge in time.¹⁵⁷ Their inner dynamic is also opposite, for where epic differentiates a *universal* situation into particular representative actions, lyric expands a *particular* momentary

¹⁵⁴ ‘Absolute epic’, ‘battlefield’: *LA* 2.1064. In discussing ‘eclectic epic’, H. Tucker quotes *LA* 2.1064–5 to associate Hegel with Owen Meredith, Robert Buchanan, Mathilde Blind (2008: 468 n.9) and ‘troops of Victorians who were in this regard armchair Hegelians whether they knew it or not’ (2008: 509).

¹⁵⁵ See e.g. *LA* 2.1168 (‘lyric principle of concentration’), 2.1113, 2.1132, 2.1153 (‘expression of a heart inwardly concentrated’).

¹⁵⁶ *LA* 2.1135–8, esp. 2.1136 (metre, by expressing mood, determines lyric types). ‘Incalculable variety’: 2.1012–13; cf. 2.1131. Hexameter: 2.1111.

¹⁵⁷ *LA* 2.1136.

mood into language and images that are universally suggestive. Hence, where the epic poet submerges his personality in objective narration and so remains essentially unknown, the lyric poet's mood 'overflows' into a passionate utterance that is easily taken as autobiographical.¹⁵⁸ In sum, where epic is the *universal* poetry that depicts a whole world through one characteristic action, in a single style, and hexameter metre, lyric is the poetry of *particularity* that sings the self with its infinite profusion of feelings and ideas. This quasi-logical structuring of poetic forms seems designed also to account for the chronological precedence of epic in many national histories: epics tend to occur *early* as a people emerge from pastoral nomadism, but lyric voices appear as *later*, self-conscious reactions against the settled, 'prosaic' conditions of work, fixed customs, laws, and institutions.¹⁵⁹ These differences are not final, however, for epic and lyric are more deeply unified as productions of *spirit*. Both potentially synthesize all human experience, epic objectively, lyric subjectively, for while an epic can be the 'bible' of a people, so 'the entirety of a nation's lyric poetry may...run through the entirety of the nation's interests, ideas, and aims', including fundamental religious and philosophical ideas.¹⁶⁰ Formally, too, each can become the other. The folk-ballads of heroic societies may be reworked into more universal epics, while in the Greek tradition, alternate hexameters were trimmed into pentameters, and so epic evolved into the elegiac couplet.¹⁶¹ These couplets developed, in turn, into choral strophes, which in turn were

¹⁵⁸ Epic poet 'disappears in...the objectivity of his creation': 2.1111. Lyric expresses the private in ways intelligible to all: 2.1119. Lyric mood 'overflows' into external expression: 2.1111, 2.1119–20, 2.1129. This image of 'overflowing' is typical of Hegel's Concept and of Romantic creation: Wordsworth's definition of 'good poetry [as] the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings' (*Lyrical Ballads*, Preface) has counterparts in e.g. Schiller—whose letter to Goethe regarding the originary *musikalische Stimmung* (cf. Lange 1973: 5–6) is quoted by Nietzsche (*Birth of Tragedy* 5) and K.O. Müller as he explores in Kantian fashion 'the artistic idea (*Kunstidee*)' (1847 [1830]: §8). The notion that an indeterminate 'musical mood' or rhythmical line precedes the words remains evident in later critics like T.S. Eliot or the 'romantic Latinist' W.R. Johnson (1982: 4–5). Remarks on the lyric poet as 'actor' who 'both is and is not himself' (2.1121–2) suggest that Hegel cannot easily be accused of the biographical fallacy common in nineteenth-century *Altertumswissenschaft* (Lloyd-Jones 1982: xvii).

¹⁵⁹ Epic versus lyric social conditions: LA 2.1123. Lyric self-consciousness asserts its difference from, within, and often *against* a prosaic community: e.g. 2.967–8, 2.976–7, 2.1122–3, 2.1127. Miller's definition of the 'lyric consciousness' as 'the re-presentation...of a "strong personality"...[which] exists not as part of a continuum with the community and its ideological commitments, but is folded back against itself, and only from this space of interiority does it relate to "the world" at large' (1994: 4) has much overlap with Hegel's; this lyric consciousness is conditioned for Miller by writing and literacy, for Hegel by 'prose'.

¹⁶⁰ LA 2.1113–14.

¹⁶¹ Folk-ballads of raids and vendettas transformed to epic: LA 2.1125. Elegiac couplet: 2.1150.

reworked in tragic and comic choruses. Homer is thus vindicated once more as the medium in which Greek civilization moves: Homeric epic provides not only the myths and characters, but even the basic poetic metre—the ‘universal’ stuff, as it were, that is progressively particularized through countless later lyrics, until the two genres were fused in Attic drama.

Thus even as Hegel ‘logicizes’ the relations of epic and lyric, he gives precedence to ancient, and specifically Greek, models. He stresses musical accompaniment; he speaks of versification primarily in terms of *length* of syllables; he lists some of the astonishing variety of Greek metres; and the variety of lyric forms he mentions are all Greek—hymns, paeans, dithyrambs, elegies, odes, iambs—sometimes with no modern equivalent.¹⁶² The beautiful individuality of Greek culture is also at play here: each lyric genre (like each Greek god, city, citizen, artist) is developed to perfection by its best practitioners, even while its deeper affinity to other art-forms is not explicitly recognized in that pre-philosophical age. Hegel himself struggles to assimilate the sheer variety of lyric forms and contents to his Concept. This resistance of lyric to categorization and rational analysis still troubles genre theorists, but Hegel’s solution is ingenious, if somewhat in tension with his avowed monism: as the poetry of individual feeling, lyric is associated with the logical moment of particularity, and hence with the realm of shifting contingencies that is the necessary ‘other’ to the Concept. Yet, even while thus resisting precise rational intelligibility, lyric too must submit to the ‘general laws of beauty and art’—in the form of a trifold classification.¹⁶³ Hymns, odes, and songs correspond to Symbolic, Classical, and Romantic styles, respectively, and are represented in antiquity by dithyrambs and Homeric hymns, Pindaric and Horatian odes, and Anacreontic *Lieder*. One recognizes in this progression an ascent from substance to

¹⁶² Syllable length fundamental: LA 2.1014–15 (instancing Horace *Odes* 2.3.2). Greek metres: 2.1016. Types of line: 2.1016; cf. 2.1020. Alcaic, Sapphic, and other strophes: 2.1014, 2.1016–17.

¹⁶³ Lyric passion ‘very opposite of intellectual logic’: LA 2.1135. Nothing definitive: 2.1117. ‘General laws of beauty’: 2.1131–2. Hegel’s argument that lyric (plural in content and form) is the inner opposite of reasoned thought (wholly unified) is echoed by genre theorists for whom lyric is a ‘notoriously elusive category’ (Wolf 2005: 21), which ‘most stubbornly defies the cold rationality of scholarly analysis’ (Müller-Zettelmann and Rubik 2005: 6; cf. Budelmann 2009: 5–7 and Wellbery 1996: 27 (‘lyric...is the genre of contingency...and of contingency as Aristotle noted, there can be no science’)). Quoting six definitions of lyric from Brogan 1994, Rutter defends Hegel’s as the ‘nearest to the essence of what, today, we imagine poetry to be’ (2010: 180). The neglect of Hegel’s theory of lyric in English is now partially remedied by Culler 2015: 92–108. Contrasting Hegel and Nietzsche on the ‘lyric I’, Jaegle (1995: 44–7) judges Hegel’s ‘die folgenreichste der subjektivistischen Lyriktheorien’, and notes its extension in the (fairly forgotten) Hegelian aesthetics of F.T. Volker (1807–87).

subjectivity—a 'growing prominence of the poet's persona'¹⁶⁴—that will be prelude to Hegel's main air. In all lyrics, even hymns sung to a god, what the lyric poet in fact sings is *himself*, as it embraces multitudes, in the universality of a rich subjectivity. The lyric poet is a 'subjective work of art' who can by the power of verbal imagination awaken that same sense of subjective infinity in others.

Such ideas inform and are informed by Hegel's remarks on ancient hymns, odes, and songs—remarks alternately startling, conventional, stimulating, unsystematic. Hymns, first, are sung when the poet loses his sense of separate personality in the hazy feeling of an infinite substance. 'Enraptured', 'shaken', and 'stunned' to a divine mood in which everything is the god, the poet launches forth in the ecstatic forms of psalms, *hymnoi*, dithyrambs, paeans, as well as the 'hortatory lyric' of the Hebrew prophets. But while 'Oriental' poets seek out metaphors and similes for the overwhelming divine, the anthropomorphic gods of the Homeric hymnists require a more determinate, epic-style description of their attributes and deeds. Nevertheless, these quasi-objective descriptions are also grounded in an 'inner enthusiasm', that makes the poems more lyric than epic in quality.¹⁶⁵ The 'converse' of the quasi-epic Homeric Hymn, and counterpart of the Psalms, is the dithyramb. Here the poet has no objective image of the god but only a turmoil of inner ecstasy that spawns forms and metres as irregular as itself. Such moods would enthral the young Nietzsche, but Hegel's Greeks are too 'Apolline' to rest content with dithyrambic effusions. *His* Greeks quickly surrounded the ecstatic mood with determinate stories, and so with time, the dithyrambic song fused with narrative to generate drama: a solid paragraph anticipates Nietzsche's thesis that tragedy was born from the spirit of music—or, more precisely, the spirit of dithyrambic hymns.¹⁶⁶

The hymn arises from the poet's inner absorption in the god, so that what the poet really expresses is his *own* awe and wonder before the sublime Other—truly other in the Psalms, more individualized in the Homeric

¹⁶⁴ Rutter 2010: 181.

¹⁶⁵ Enraptured, shaken, stunned: *LA* 2.1139–41. Examples of Oriental metaphor: 2.1140 (Psalms 29, 33). Homeric Hymns' 'plastic' picture: 2.1150; cf. 2.1042–3 ('lyrical enthusiasm' of epic hexameters of Parmenides, Xenophanes). Of ancient hymns, Hegel concentrates almost solely on the Homeric, ignoring Callimachus and mentioning SS Ambrose and Augustine only for their prosody and rhyme (2.1025). Paean, mentioned: 2.1211.

¹⁶⁶ *LA* 2.1139; cf. 2.1212 on the dramatic chorus. Hegel seems not to know that Greek dithyrambs featured narrative, and were not necessarily 'dithyrambic' effusions in the modern sense or as in the 'New Music' of a Timotheus (see Pickard-Cambridge 1997).

Hymns' anthropomorphic deities. The difference in Symbolic hymns between poet and subject-matter is elided in the central genre of the Classical style—the ode. In odes, it is again some mighty external other that is the *ostensible* impetus for song, but with much struggle the poet 'masters his subject, transforms it within himself, brings himself to expression in it'. The struggle leaves its mark in the 'swing and boldness of language', the leaps of thought, that characterize great odes.¹⁶⁷ Such descriptions of the genre seem most inspired by Pindar, known for his difficult expression, and who for Hegel occupies the 'summit of perfection' in this type of lyric.¹⁶⁸

The following passage touches upon many of Hegel's ideas concerning the Pindaric ode, as it evolved from commission to performance:

Pindar was frequently asked to celebrate this or that victor in the Games and indeed he made his living by taking money for his compositions; and yet, as bard, *he puts himself in his hero's place* and independently combines with his own imagination the praise of the deeds of his hero's ancestors, it may be; he recalls old myths, or he expresses his own profound view of life, wealth, dominion, whatever is great and honourable, the sublimity and charm of the Muses, but *above all the dignity of the bard*. Consequently in his poems he is not so much concerned to honour the hero whose fame he spreads in this way *as to make himself, the poet, heard*. He himself has not the honour of having sung the praises of victors, for it is they who have acquired honour by being made the subject of Pindar's verse.

(LA 2.1129–30, italics added)

In this context, Hegel understands Pindar's odes as *Gelegenheitsgedichte*, poems composed for a particular occasion. For German poets, the occasion might be some princeling's birth or wedding, or some more purely private 'mood and feeling', but in Pindar's case it was the Panhellenic Games—those public occasions of 'the highest importance and substantive worth, the glorification of the gods as well as of victors in those games wherein the

¹⁶⁷ Pindar's sublime struggle may be implicitly juxtaposed with some of Schiller's meditative 'songs', as they unfold from some 'grand fundamental thought' (LA 2.1146).

¹⁶⁸ LA 2.1151. Klopstock's greatness is reflected in the fact that a 'great part' of his poetry 'remains classical' (2.1154), yet he too 'composed many frigid odes' (2.1156). Hegel does not mention Hölderlin's odes, or Keats's.

Greeks...had an objective vision of their national unity'.¹⁶⁹ These grand occasions Pindar manages to raise to an even higher significance by evoking their mythic radiance, associating the victors to gods and heroes, and so charging the listening community with something of the poet's *own* sublime consciousness. On the one hand, Hegel strives to justify Pindar's odes as 'Classical' in his sense of the term: they balance seeming opposites—particular occasion and universal significance, human community and divine background, traditional myths and free poetic imagination. On the other hand, what takes on ultimate importance is not so much the occasion, athletic victory, and subject-matter, as the poet himself, the mind whose *universal* vision transforms bare *particulars* into concrete *individual* events shot through with politico-religious profundity. In all this, what is most determinative for Hegel is how a lyricist like Pindar ultimately *sings himself*—as the embodiment of the Greek mind. Moreover, as the 'overflowing' of a poetic soul steeped in the history, mythology, and mentality of his people, the odes of Pindar allow Greece to think itself: through the odes, Greece attains its highest self-consciousness.¹⁷⁰ It is perhaps only the systematic modern mind, however, that can pierce through Pindar's *pathos* and 'flights of intoxicated enthusiasm' to recognize how he produced 'work completely unified in itself': the vehement energy of the Spirit itself here overreaches itself to integrate the poet's passion and whole Greek mythological tradition into its larger self-reflection.¹⁷¹

Such an understanding of the ode makes it (for Hegel) the logical predecessor for the even more explicitly self-reflective song (*Lied*). Hafiz, Anacreon, and Goethe are taken as champions of the *Lied* in the Symbolic Orient, Classical Greece, and Romantic Germany, respectively. In some ways, Anacreon is the unifying figure here. The Pindaric ode, with its difficult language and public themes, was standardly opposed to the

¹⁶⁹ *Gelegenheitsgedichte*: LA 1.202–3 (juxtaposing Pindar with Goethe's poems, *Werther*), 2.1118–19. Panhellenic Games: 2.1151.

¹⁷⁰ In this respect, Hegel's Pindar utterly anticipates (in its own 'logical' idiom) recent work on the public and traditional voice of the Pindaric "I" (e.g. Johnson 1982: 77, Miller 1994: 82–8 with further references). For Shankman, self-referentiality is the 'axiomatic' notion for which contemporary critical theory is 'indebted' to Hegel above all (1994: 119).

¹⁷¹ Intoxicated enthusiasm: LA 2.1142. Pindaric ode 'completely unified': 2.1142. Hegel does not explain this unity in detail: an elusive quarry, traditionally postulated by Pindarists as the key to understanding the odes. Hubbard's study of the 'Pindaric mind' (1985) may distantly recall Hegel's logico-historical approach: for Hubbard, a 'logic' of quasi-structural polarities (e.g. near–far, hard–soft) gives the odes a differentiated unity. Drawing on categories closer to Hegel's own, Shankman discerns in 'Hegel's Neoplatonic Pindar' a striving for the sublimity of the One (1994: 117–22).

Anacreontic song—light, easy, and cheerfully personal. The rose, wine, women, and passing of time were such popular themes in later eighteenth-century German poetry that the terms ‘Anacreontic’ and ‘lyric’ became fairly synonymous and helped contribute to create a poetry of private subjectivity.¹⁷² In this context, Hafiz was styled ‘the Persian Anacreon’, and Goethe too surrendered to poetic expectations by composing Anacreontics.¹⁷³ The same timelessly Rococo figure revives in Hegel’s Anacreon, as he sings about himself ‘among roses, lovely girls and youths, as drinking and dancing, in cheerful enjoyment, without desire or longing, without duty, and without neglecting higher ends’. Most of all, Hegel’s Anacreon *sings himself*, as ‘hero’ and a ‘subjective work of art’.¹⁷⁴ Singing subject and sung object become identical in the sensuous utterance of the song: the light-hearted bard of Teos becomes (*mirabile dictu!*) yet another avatar of Absolute Spirit.

In Hegel’s history of ancient lyric, Greek lyric develops from the Homeric hymns through the elegies of Callinus and Tyrtaeus, the melics of Sappho and Alcaeus, Anacreontic songs and popular scolia, Pindar’s choral odes, and ends with the learned experiments of the Hellenistic *savants*: an evolution from epic objectivity to proto-Romantic subjectivity that mirrors art’s overall history. Again, the singers of the Homeric hymns are, as half-Oriental Ionians, absorbed in their image of a god. Elegy too ‘belongs almost exclusively to the Ionians with whom the objective is uppermost’, and the elegist applies a lyric tone to material often quasi-epic and ‘substantial’.¹⁷⁵ Hegel did not know of Alcman, Stesichorus, or Bacchylides, and alludes only to Ibycus, via Schiller’s ‘Cranes of Ibycus’, which is ‘neither epic nor dramatic but lyric’.¹⁷⁶ Melic or Lesbian poetry—both Sappho’s feminine and

¹⁷² First published by Estienne in 1549, the Anacreontics were translated and emulated by e.g. Ronsard in France, Herrick and Cowley in England, Thomas More in Ireland, while von Hagedorn, Gleim, Uz, Götz, Hölty, and Johann Jacobi in eighteenth-century Germany prepare for the early Lessing and Goethe: in Roth’s judgment, ‘no other Greek poet was as instrumental in the development of the modern lyric as “Anacreon”’ (2000: 330; cf. Lees 1911, Warde 1978: 1–15). Hegel’s reference to ‘the songs called Anacreon’s’ suggests a doubt that they are indeed by him, but elsewhere he calls them ‘Anacreon’s songs’ without qualification (LA 2.1120–1, 2.1145).

¹⁷³ Hafiz as Persian Anacreon: cf. LA 2.1121. Goethe: poems in *Leipziger Liederbuch* (1770), and the later, much-anthologized *Anakreons Grab* (1806). Hegel does not analyse Goethe as ‘hero’ of his own erotic *Römische Elegien* (for example), but he does tend to understand him as one who, like Anacreon, could transform his experiences directly into song. ‘Every occurrence in life became a poem for him [Goethe]’ (LA 2.1118; cf. 2.1131): a remark recalling Goethe’s statement that his works are *Bruchstücke einer großen Konfession (Dichtung und Wahrheit 7)*.

¹⁷⁴ LA 2.1120–1; cf. LR 2.480 n.639 (1824) on Anacreon’s ‘battle’ with Eros *within*.

¹⁷⁵ LA 2.1150.

¹⁷⁶ Alcman’s *parthenia*, the earliest extant choral lyrics, were discovered in 1855, Stesichorus’ odes in the 1860s, Bacchylides’ in 1896. Hegel alludes to early iambic invective, without naming

Alcaeus' masculine metres—introduce 'really lyric reflection and passion',¹⁷⁷ thus preparing for Pindar's odes, the most complete of classical forms. After Pindar, the lyric impulse was absorbed by the dramatic choruses, but lyric *per se* retreated from the bright Games to the dusty dens of the Alexandrians:

The later lyric poetry of the Hellenistic age is hardly an independent further development but rather a pedantic imitation and a struggle for elegance and correctness of expression, until at last it is dissipated into tiny graces and pleasantries, or tries in epigrams to tie together anew, by the string of feeling and fancy, the already existent blossoms of art and life, and to freshen them by the wit of praise or satire. (LA 2.1152)

Theocritus' pastorals and Callimachus' epigrams thus seem to belong to the final 'baroque' or 'rococo' period that in Winckelmann's theory ends each artistic tradition. Divorced from the larger political and religious community, Greek poetry is drained of its vitality, and Hegel seems to find living charm only in some epigrams of the Greek Anthology¹⁷⁸—a scant harvest in comparison with the revolutions in Neoplatonic Alexandria, as the World-Spirit turned slowly from art to religion and philosophy.

Hegel offers equally faint praise for Roman lyric. In his Augustan age, poetry was a 'refined intellectual pleasure', burdened by the felt need to imitate Greek models, to reproduce Greek mythological apparatus, and other 'pedantry': not for him the *labor* and *venustas* of 'modern' Neoteric *nugae*. On the whole, the Roman lyricists were translators and copiers, but in failing to fully assimilate the Greek 'other', they lack the spontaneity of *their* classics. In the vacuous genre of idyll, for example, Theocritus has a definite charm, but Virgil's *Eclogues* are 'colder'. Horace, however, seems the main example of a Roman poet able to speak with a voice that is his own and 'peculiarly Roman'.¹⁷⁹ But it is a rather prosaic voice. Perhaps revisiting Horace's own self-conception as the bee to Pindar's eagle, Hegel finds in him none of Pindar's sublime imaginative flights, and even his efforts at lyric

Archilochus or Hipponax; Simonides, Herondas, and others are also not mentioned. Schiller's Cranes: LA 2.1114. The narrative songs of Ibycus (and Stesichorus) are now often regarded as mediating between epic and drama: e.g. Segal 1985.

¹⁷⁷ LA 2.1151.

¹⁷⁸ LA 1.555 and 2.1117 compares these epigrams to the *Xenien* of Goethe and Schiller, among others.

¹⁷⁹ 'Classical' union: LA 2.1149. Pastoral: 2.1151. Refined pleasure, pedantry, copying, peculiarly Roman: 2.1152.

pathos are contrived.¹⁸⁰ He does, it is true, recall Pindar in proudly asserting his poetic independence, and *Odes* such as 1.20, 3.28, and 4.12 display the lyricist's capricious freedom to select the details he likes.¹⁸¹ But where Pindar freely celebrates the great Games, Horace sings of his daily walk, his dinner preparations, and the fixed ideas of political allegory and propaganda. All of this is 'very jejune', and his 'prosaic subject-matter' is only poorly compensated for by scintillating technique and rhetorical elaboration, characteristic of the Latin poets generally.¹⁸² Even here, Horace's reworking of Greek metrical forms introduces a certain pedantic rigidity, if it is Horace who inspires Hegel's generalization that 'the Romans hardened the lively and serene sensuousness of the Greek metres, especially by more fixed rules for inserting the caesura not only in the hexameter but also in the metres of sapphics and alcaics etc., and so produced a more sharply pronounced structure and stricter regularity'. Imitating Greek models yet foreshadowing modern subjectivity, regularizing Greek metres and even introducing rhymes, Hegel's Horace seems to straddle the divide between Classical and Romantic. In this he becomes representative of Roman lyric as a whole. Hegel does not explicitly mention the lyrics of Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, or Ovid, but in one passage he sums up Horace and the 'Latin poets generally' as *Meistersingers* to the Greek *Minnesingers*: the self-conscious, brilliantly technical, and imitative to the spontaneous, 'genuine', and original.¹⁸³

3.2.5.3. Drama

Among its myriad subspecies, a lyric poem can sometimes take the form of a 'conversation and can therefore adopt the external form of a dialogue'. Hegel offers no examples of this 'hybrid' lyric and could not have known Bacchylides' Ode 18, rediscovered in 1896 and prime evidence for those who would find in such lyric dialogues the birth of tragedy: an *hypocritēs*

¹⁸⁰ Contrived *pathos*: LA 1.1135 (perhaps with inspiration from *Ode* 4.2). Overly self-conscious: 2.1110, 2.1118. Hegel's various remarks on Horace may draw on e.g. *Odes* 1.12, 1.20, 1.22, 2.3, 3.14, 3.28, and 4.12.

¹⁸¹ Capricious freedom: LA 2.1115. Horace, Klopstock, Pindar listed in ascending order of poetic independence vis-à-vis Augustus, publishers, *poleis*: 2.1130–1.

¹⁸² 'Prosaic subject-matter', rhetorical style: LA 2.1010. Technique: 2.1024, 2.1127; cf. 2.618. 'Jejune': 2.1142. Horace himself pioneers this assessment of his *Musa pedestris*: see e.g. *Satires* 1.4.40–2. Horace's novel synthesis of private and public draws less stinted praise from Conte (1994: 297, 303–10) and makes the *Odes* for Miller 'a crucial moment in the history of lyric' (1994: 181).

¹⁸³ Stricter rhythms, rhymes: LA 2.1024 (Latin literary 'tendency approaching the romantic character'). Parny as 'the French Tibullus': 1.508. *Meistersingers*: 2.1127.

steps out of the chorus and 'answers' it, with an independent voice that would develop into a full dramatic persona. That drama evolved from the dithyrambic chorus remains the dominant general theory, but Hegel characteristically seeks a deeper, inner relation between the two genres: the lyricist's intense subjectivity emerges anew in both choral lyrics and the *pathē* of dramatic personae; at the same time, drama involves characters in actions, situations, and relations that revisit the objectivity of epic.¹⁸⁴ Infusing epic action with a new psychological depth, synthesizing epic and lyric, drama becomes the 'truth' of poetry, and hence even of art itself.

The 'logical' structuring of drama is particularly evident in its ancient varieties, as analysed by Hegel. The *chorus* represents the community, with its conventional, unreflective consciousness, as well as the 'divine' background of substantial and universal interests; this background 'universal' is differentiated into a variety of particular *protagonists*, each animated by some domineering passion which drives them to clash with each other; as this conflict works itself out, the universal re-emerges at a higher level, bringing a more conscious *resolution*, either in the form of tragic reconciliation or comic celebration.¹⁸⁵ Substantial *chorus*, particular *protagonists* in conflict, and final *resolution*: distilled to its UPI structure, Hegel's unified theory has the simplicity of genius, and the fact that his extensive remarks draw widely on actual plays makes this section of his *LA* much clearer, and arguably more rewarding, than the denser, narrower discussion of *Antigone* in *PS*.

Let us explore in some more detail these three elements, in tragic drama. First, the chorus—the ethical community in its unreflective state—embodies necessary and perennial values like familial love, patriotism, law, piety, and religion. These interests not only provide the basic stuff of great drama: they are the 'substantial' ground of Greek ethical life, and inasmuch as the substantial and necessary is the 'divine', Hegel is happy to call these 'eternal powers'. They are not the 'absolutely Divine itself, but the sons of an Absolute Idea', and as such shape human life—the 'essential needs of the

¹⁸⁴ Lyric as 'conversation': *LA* 2.1138. Dramatic 'conciliation' of epic and lyric: e.g. 2.1160. In this regard, Hegel revises Aristotle's remark that tragic dialogue should be in iambs—not because it is the most speakable and natural (*Poetics* 1449a23–8) but because it mediates between the 'uniform' hexameter and the 'rather jerky... measures of lyric' (2.1173–4).

¹⁸⁵ Succinctly: 'The ethical order is to be exhibited from the outset as the substantive foundation and general background out of which the actions of individuals grow and develop into a conflict and then are tugged back out of it into unity again': *LA* 2.1208. The threefold movement ideally gives a play three acts (as with the Spanish), not Shakespeare's five or the Greeks' indefinite number (2.1169–70).

human' and 'the gods of our actual life'. He does not explicitly correlate such powers with individual deities (e.g. vengeance with the Furies, justice with Zeus), but it is clear that ethico-religious 'powers' together constitute both the divine and the human community.¹⁸⁶ This totality is reflected in the chorus, which is therefore not an accidental feature of drama but rather its first component, historically, logically, dramatically. Historically, the chorus developed from the dithyrambic chorus as it communed with its god in half-articulate ecstasy. Logically, the chorus represents objective Spirit in its first, unreflective immediacy. It is naively pious towards all the divine powers, 'wills the substantial order as a whole', but does not compare and judge critically.¹⁸⁷ As a dramatic presence, the chorus is static but not inert. Unlike Schlegel's 'ideal spectator', Hegel's chorus does not contemplate the stage with a distant and 'tranquil reflection' but is absorbed in the actions unfolding before it. Now sympathizing with the protagonists, now deploring their relentless energy, it is alternately 'half horrified and half admiring'. At times it may 'venerate as higher than itself' those characters who rouse themselves to tremendous activity, and among these heroes it distributes its admiration equally and uncritically. At other times, it laments and decries their vehement one-sidedness, but in the absence of more nuanced ideas, falls back on old saws about forbearance and human finitude.¹⁸⁸ If the chorus is thus indeed a 'spectator', it is also the corporate body of Theban, Athenian, or Mycenaean citizens from whose ranks emerge the more aristocratic protagonists: it watches, but also suffers the dramatic conflict which it beholds. In *PS* Hegel flirts with the possibly logical notion that the chorus is the 'ground' of the action.¹⁸⁹ A related metaphor in *LA* would sometimes denote the chorus as a *space*. As both 'terrain and spectator of action', it is the 'scene of the spirit'; it is the unchanging ethical realm in which the tragic action unfolds and to which it continually tries to recall the protagonists, reminding them of the possibility of a 'secure refuge' in communal harmonies renewed.¹⁹⁰ As a 'higher moral consciousness' championing the ethical

¹⁸⁶ Chorus as substantial community: *LA* esp. 2.1208–11. Perennial concerns: 1.220 ('sons') 1.223–4 ('essential needs'), 2.1162 ('eternal powers, i.e. what is essentially moral, the gods of our actual life'), 2.1194.

¹⁸⁷ *LA* 2.1208.

¹⁸⁸ No 'tranquil reflection': *LA* 2.1210. Venerating, horrified: 2.1209 (cf. *PS* §734: praising, fearing, pitying the characters). The 'ideal spectator' of A. Schlegel's chorus represents 'the common mind of the nation... the general sympathy of mankind' (1876 [1809]: Lecture V). Billings 2013 surveys contemporary views of the chorus, as well as its treatment in *PS*.

¹⁸⁹ *PS* §734 (*Der allgemeine Boden*). Does this *Boden* do the work of *SL*'s category of real ground (*Grund*), a kind of underlying, non-sufficient cause?

¹⁹⁰ 'Terrain': *LA* 2.1209. 'Scene' and 'refuge': 2.1211.

unity that precedes and survives its diremption in conflict, the chorus is central to the drama. When it loses its centrality and becomes a mere 'ornament', tragedy 'decays'.¹⁹¹

To turn to dramatic character. The Classical *personae* so admired by Hegel are finely balanced between the customary world of the chorus and the infinite depths of the Romantic self, or, differently expressed, between epic and lyric characters. Homer's Achilles and Odysseus embody a whole world and fill vast epics with their particular exploits; the lyric character is narrower yet in the purity of feeling produces songs that are universally representative. The tragic character fuses lyric *pathos* with epic action. Like the lyric persona, he is determined by an inner state that is not idiosyncratic, but a 'divine power' and perennial human possibility.¹⁹² This powerful, quasi-lyric *pathos* drives the dramatic protagonist not to sing but to act, and on stage his being is objectified fully in speeches, gestures, and actions. Acting wholly out of the inner necessity of his 'overmastering passion', with no distinction between his will and its objects, the dramatic character does not deliberate, hesitate, falter, regret, or disown his actions: they are necessary extensions of his subjective reality. Therefore, an Oedipus is neither guilty or innocent: he is *both* guilty of acting as he did, *and* innocent for not being able to act otherwise. All this lies behind Hegel's description of the dramatic character as 'an absolute unity': inner *pathos* and outer action mirror each other perfectly, and such characters 'are what they are, and never anything else'.¹⁹³

Hegel offers many examples of *pathos*-defined characters and their consequent actions. Aeschylus' Clytemnestra burns to avenge her daughter Iphigenia, Orestes his father Agamemnon, while the Eumenides' rage to

¹⁹¹ 'Higher moral consciousness': LA 2.1210. Hegel's theory that the lyric chorus is the heart of drama, historically and generically, is summarized in a resonant passage: 'it is an utterly false view to regard the chorus as something casually dragged in and a mere relic of the time when Greek drama originated. No doubt its external origin is to be traced to the fact that at festivals of Dionysus the chief thing, in art at any rate, was choral song, until subsequently, as a break, a narrator came on the scene, and his message was finally transformed and elevated into the actual figures of a dramatic action. But in the age of tragedy's full bloom the chorus was not retained at all merely in honour of this feature of religious festivals and Dionysus worship; on the contrary it was developed ever more beautifully and in a more measured way simply because it belongs essentially to the dramatic action itself and is so necessary to it that the decay of tragedy is especially manifested in the deterioration of the choruses which no longer remain an integral part of the whole but sink down into being an unnecessary ornament' (LA 2.1212).

¹⁹² LA 1162–3 ('Driving pathos', 'eternal powers, i.e. what is essentially moral, the gods of our actual life'); cf. 1.220, 1.568, 2.972–3, 2.1038, 2.1195.

¹⁹³ Lyric being objectified in stage actions: e.g. LA 2.1178. 'Overmastering passion': 2.1210. Tragic hero guilty, innocent: 1.188, 2.1214. Dramatic *personae* 'are what they are': 2.1214.

punish the matricide is also in itself just. Sophocles' Oedipus cannot be turned from his *pathos* for self-knowledge, as he sends embassies to Delphi, confronts Teiresias, dismisses Jocasta's fears, interrogates the Theban messenger and shepherd; Euripides' Phaedra is driven by Aphrodite intent on punishing Hippolytus for neglecting her. By far the most determinative example for Hegel is Sophocles' Antigone: Antigone's devotion to brother, family, and Hades' rights to receive the dead cannot be quenched by tyrannical decree; Creon is equally devoted to the *polis*, the *polis*-protecting divinities of Zeus and Ares, and the community's right to punish a traitor, not to be abrogated by familial partiality.¹⁹⁴ One could intelligently extend Hegel's approach to other tragic characters, such as Aeschylus' Prometheus, Sophocles' Deianeira, or Euripides' Hippolytus and Pentheus. But his ideas best fit Sophocles' characters: Antigone, Creon, Ajax, Philoctetes, Electra *are* isolated in their passionate pride and they act out their principles with a fiercely stubborn 'heroic temper'.¹⁹⁵

Hegelian ideas have been applied to Brecht's more obviously didactic characters, and Hegel anticipates the criticism that he regards dramatic *personae* as 'merely interests personified'.¹⁹⁶ This is perhaps true of the Senecan stage, where lightly disguised abstractions strut and declaim rhetorically. For Hegel, Seneca's tragedies are 'failures', and later Italian, Spanish, and French dramatists err similarly by scripting 'abstract representatives of general types and passions rather than... truly living individuals'. More insightful were the Greek dramatists, whose characters hover beautifully between allegorical abstractions and the self-reflective soliloquizers of modern drama.¹⁹⁷ For though their characters align themselves with some 'big idea' to the exclusion of others, each also reflects the totality of ethical relations. Creon is not *just* the leader defending his city's interests: he is also the uncle of Antigone, father of Haemon, brother of Jocasta, husband,

¹⁹⁴ Aeschylus' House of Atreus: LA 1.214, 1.232 (Orestes), 1.516, 2.1213. Oedipus: 2.1212. Phaedra: 1.564. Antigone: 1.221, 1.232, 1.568, 2.1212–13.

¹⁹⁵ Bernard Knox's 1983 interpretation of the Sophoclean hero as all of a piece—passionate, stubborn, self-sufficient, defiant—is in this regard quite Hegelian, though he emphasizes more the incommensurable mystery of the divine background, on which Pollitt (1972: 29–31) is also eloquent: 'strangely violent is the grace of gods / who sit enthroned in holiness' (Aeschylus *Agamemnon* 182–3). The Aeschylean *Prometheus Vincitus* seems to pit Prometheus (stubbornly one-minded in his *philanthrōpia*) against Zeus (stubbornly determined to maintain law and rank): these characters may show Sophoclean influence (Knox 1983: 44–50), and certainly match Hegel's preferences.

¹⁹⁶ LA 2.1177; cf. 1.263–80. For a partially Hegelian Brecht, see Steer 1968.

¹⁹⁷ Seneca's failures: LA 2.1227. Italian, Spanish, French abstractions: 2.1176–8. Beautiful middle of Greek characters: 2.1209–10.

son, and so the family makes its substantial claims on him too, even though in his passion for civic justice he ignores them.¹⁹⁸ As with Homer's Achilles, there is a penumbra of relations about each tragic character that makes them full beyond their explicit self-conceptions; as with lyric expression, each *pathos* when fully developed moves beyond the merely personal to become universal. In more ontological terms, it is as concrete universals, even Leibnizian monads that tragic protagonists can mediate between abstract symbolism and Romantic complexity: they incarnate definite *pathē*, yet as universal 'powers', these *pathē* make them rounded wholes, 'totalities', even in their determinate particularity.¹⁹⁹

This quasi-logical analysis precludes any real character development, however, and in explaining their alleged quality as 'lofty, absolutely determinate individuals' Hegel draws often on the 'sculptural' principle of his Greeks, in several ways.²⁰⁰ First, Greek actors wore masks, which by freezing some one characteristic type, have a clear sculptural effect. When the masked *persona* appears on stage, it is 'as a totally solid objective statue', and so where sculpture individualizes its ideal types in static isolation, drama sets them in animated motion: in drama the statue 'is vitalized'. Sophoclean characters most epitomize this 'plastic self-sufficiency', and so Greek statuary can teach one more about the 'lofty tragic characters of the Greeks' than 'all other commentaries and notes'.²⁰¹ Masks had the further effect of making acting less technical. An actor who wears a mask does not need to harmonize facial expressions with words, and beneath a heavy mask cannot modulate his voice to nuanced shades of expression. So, Hegel reasons, Greek actors declaimed their lines (perhaps with musical accompaniment), to help convey the basic verbal meaning. Nor did they need the 'richly endowed genius' required of modern actors tasked with interpreting complex characters through labyrinthine plots and subplots. The lesser demands of Greek acting ensured that Sophocles, Aristophanes, and

¹⁹⁸ LA 2.1217–18; cf. 1.239 on the *pathos* of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

¹⁹⁹ This 'logical' nuance is often overlooked by those who caricature Hegel's analysis of tragic character as sheer binary. Judith Butler, for instance, attributes to him a 'simple' opposition between Antigone and Creon, not realizing that his figures too *are* 'chiasmically related' (2000: 6), 'mirror' (10) each other as individuations of the divine power or ethical substance (e.g. *PS* §463), and do *not* merely 'stand for' (1) or allegorically 'represent' (3–4) supposedly clear-cut concepts like kinship and state.

²⁰⁰ 'Lofty individuals': LA 2.1210.

²⁰¹ LA 2.1195. Actor as 'objective statue': 2.1186. Sophocles' plastic characters: 1.239. Masks' sculptural quality: 2.1187. Classical French drama, and nineteenth-century restagings of Greek tragedies, expected actors to bear themselves with 'statuesque' dignity. This interplay of sculptural and dramatic characterization is evident in Classical art also: Pollitt 1972: 27–36.

ordinary citizens could take to the stage; full-time actors were not *respected* professionals; and far from being a fine art in itself, acting was often maligned as a low sort of trade.²⁰² Such observations seem somewhat incompatible with Hegel's admiration for ancient drama as the pinnacle of the art, but they do reinforce his vision of ancient *personae* as solid 'sculptures', ideal but not thoroughly individualized.

A play involves more than one such *persona*, but when two strong-minded characters with opposite *pathē* meet, they cannot but conflict. In their 'lyric' purity of mind, protagonist and antagonist are each absolutely convinced of their rightness, which they cannot compromise. Nor can they sympathize with or even recognize their opponent's perspective, for 'each can establish the true and positive content of its own aim and character only by denying and infringing the equally justified power of the other'. The result is conflict—the 'original essence of tragedy'.²⁰³ Thus drama for Hegel is not to be primarily understood in Aristotelian terms as a means for evoking, purging, or purifying emotion, nor as imitation (*mimēsis*) of character or of 'serious action'. Character, action, and emotion are abstractions from the central tragic dynamic: the clashing actions of characters in their intractably opposite *pathē*. Hegel's innovative focus on conflict has been insightful enough to pass into commonplace, but one should appreciate how well his schema captures the sense of mounting doom in tragedy: driven by their own inner nature, characters entangle themselves in a web of action and counter-action, whose looming effects they cannot escape, and which the audience feels as the ineluctable power of Fate. This dimension of tragedy gives it a resonance beyond itself: contradictions internal to the logical Concept, epic wars, and the wars of world-history seem to vindicate the notion that 'tragic' conflict is inherent in Being itself.

Before turning to Hegel's insistence that dramatic conflict be resolved, let us glance at his trifold division of tragic conflicts, as they evolve from the 'purely physical' to the spiritual.²⁰⁴ First, those conflicts centring wholly on natural circumstances (e.g. Alcestis' illness, Philoctetes' foot-wound) are fairly 'void of interest'.²⁰⁵ More promising are conflicts merely *occasioned*

²⁰² Lines declaimed: LA 2.1186. Modern actors need for 'genius': 2.1189. Complicated modern plots: 2.1207. Amateur citizen-actors: 2.1187. Professionals not respected: 2.1189–90, where Hegel hints at the moral and social 'blot' that a Solon or Plato found in acting. He does not mention the late Classical and Hellenistic 'technicians of Dionysus', who organized themselves into guild-like *synodoi*; nor how the 'New Music' may have emerged alongside more singular, professionalizable talents—perhaps akin to modern virtuoso musicians whom Hegel treats as artist-interpreters in their own right (2.956–7).

²⁰³ LA 2.1196.

²⁰⁴ LA 2.1212–14; cf. 1.204–17.

²⁰⁵ LA 1.206; cf. 1.227.

by natural facts: in Euripides' *Iphigenia* plays, the contingency of foreign birth threatens the deaths of Iphigenia and Orestes; in Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*, the chance of birth occasions the clash of Polyneices and Eteocles, the 'enmity of brothers' being a theme of perennial artistic interest, particularly in the pre-Germanic world when the absence of primogeniture exasperated rival claims to the throne. But it is not so inherently tragic a theme as Aristotle insisted, precisely because the collision rests on a merely 'natural basis'.²⁰⁶ The most tragic conflicts emerge when characters accidentally (e.g. Sophocles' Ajax and Oedipus) or by conscious will transgress some spiritual power or venerable reality.²⁰⁷ Most important in this category are probably those deliberate transgressions that spark conflict between family and state. This conflict is at the centre not only of the *Antigone*, but also such plays as Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*, *Agamemnon*, and *Choephoroi*, Sophocles' *Electra*, and Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*. In *Agamemnon*, for example, the king, in sacrificing his daughter to gain divine sanction for the expedition, serves the state but sins against the family, while Clytemnestra's maternal vengeance, oppositely, transgresses the rights of the kingdom. Hegel likens the conflict of Orestes in *Choephoroi* and *Electra* (public duty to avenge his father and king versus filial duty to his mother) with that of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, with the difference that without the Greek's acknowledged duty to vengeance, Hamlet agonizes, and the conflict internal to his character becomes the play's focus, whereas the Classical practice was to represent the clash between family and state as an objective one: the Furies who vie with Apollo in *Eumenides* are *not* Orestes' subjective conscience.²⁰⁸

Hegel's preference for an 'objective' clash ensures that he finds other forms of conflict 'less concrete'. The main type here is the collision between free human consciousness and divine fate, staged most effectively in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and *Oedipus Coloneus*.²⁰⁹ In Hegel's monistic dialectic, such conflicts give way to those more internal to the human self: a move that seems to bypass what most troubles Sophocles—how human knowledge and wilful control can crumble before relentless, inscrutable fate. Hegel for his part can hint that the conflict occurs *within* Sophocles'

²⁰⁶ Euripides' *Iphigenia* plays: *LA* 1.212. Aeschylus' Polyneices, Eteocles: 1.206–7, 2.1060–1. Enmity of brothers: 1.207–8. Intra-familial conflicts (recommended by Aristotle to evoke tragic pity and fear: *Poetics* 1453b14–26) are reinterpreted as 'spiritual collisions which rest on natural bases': 1.206; cf. 2.1060.

²⁰⁷ *Ajax*, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, House of Atreus: *LA* 1.214; cf. Aristotle *Poetics* 1353a17–23.

²⁰⁸ Various plays, including *Seven against Thebes*, *Agamemnon*: *LA* 2.1213. Orestes, Hamlet: 2.1225–6. Orestes tormented by Furies, not conscience: 1.278, 1.463–4.

²⁰⁹ *LA* 2.1214.

Oedipus and Ajax, as their higher, *conscious* selves condemn their *past* selves for doing the deed in ignorance.²¹⁰ Yet such psychological complexity is more properly a product of Christian reflection for Hegel, and seems artistically distasteful. Corneille's *Cid*, for example, has 'splendid rhetoric and affecting monologues', but the way it stages 'the diremption of one and the same heart . . . tossed hither and thither out of the abstraction of honour into that of love, and vice versa, is inherently contrary to solid decisiveness and unity of character'. Elsewhere he expresses a preference for clearly-limned, classically 'sculptural' characters, who do not 'swither irresolutely from this to that' but simply 'are what they are': Homer's Achilles, Anacreon, Sophoclean and Aristophanic characters, Raphael's figures. What then might he have said about the monologues of Euripides' Medea as she swerves between honour and maternal love? Hegel explicitly limits himself to tragedy as practised by Aeschylus and Sophocles, but his remarks on Euripides seem in line with Schiller's judgment of him as a 'sentimental' poet—in Hegel's terms, a proto-'Romantic'. For *his* Euripides tends to fashion more emotional characters, given (in the modern, subjective way) to 'the weakness of irresolution, the swithering of reflection, perplexity about the reasons that are to guide decision'.²¹¹ In all, then, from the clash of visible 'powers' to inner psychological turmoil, Hegel classifies tragedies according to the type of conflict they exhibit. His essentialist approach has been significantly extended by Roche (1998), who in openly Hegelian fashion orders tragedies (and comedies) in a hierarchy of fundamental types and subtypes, and judges particular plays to the extent to which they are 'true' to their 'concept'.

Whatever the precise conflict dramatized, it can only be resolved when the narrow, one-sided *pathos* of each party is 'cancelled' and somehow reconciled with the other in a renewed awareness of the totality of ethical 'powers'. This resolution can occur in three ways. First, *objective* resolution sees individual protagonists 'sacrificed' and 'shattered' by the consequences of their actions, as happens with Sophocles' Antigone and Creon; or their *pathē* may be educated, as it were, to new ranks and honours in a more

²¹⁰ LA 1.213.

²¹¹ *Cid*: LA 1.241. Characters who do not 'swither': 2.1213, 1.236–44. 'Are what they are': Homeric Achilles (2.1068), Anacreon (2.1121), Greek tragic and comic *personae* (2.1214, 2.1220–1), Italian Renaissance figures (as well as Dante's characters: 2.874); cf. Raphael's *Young Boy*, Murillo's beggars, 'all of one piece' (1.170), Pyrrhonist sceptics (LP 2.332–3). Euripides' proto-modern characters: 2.1228; cf. 2.1215, 2.1221. Focus on Aeschylus, Sophocles: 2.1218.

rational dispensation, as when the vengeful Furies yield to Apollo's legal justice, and are accommodated as Eumenides in Athena's city.²¹² Far less satisfactory are those *subjective* resolutions, effected when the proud tragic protagonist suddenly contradicts himself and abandons his character and *pathos* alike, to submit rather arbitrarily to a 'higher power': a god descends 'from the machine' to restore the ethico-religious community. Such *deus ex machina* resolutions are indeed mechanical, and offend against Hegel's sense of the organic totality of tragic character, *pathos*, and action: Sophocles' *Philoctetes* is his constant example, while the crudely 'prosaic' and 'external' divine intervention in Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis* was improved immeasurably by Goethe's 'poetic masterpiece'.²¹³ The third type of reconciliation occurs in the *inner* spirit.²¹⁴ Though this 'borders' on modern practice, Hegel illustrates it with Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus*. After his crimes, self-discovery, and bitter exile, Oedipus at Colonus calls down upon himself 'his own Fury [or curse]', and so 'expunges all his own inner discord and is purified within'. Transfigured, he dies. Here Oedipus' *pathos* has so evolved as to condemn itself from on high, and this 'visible reconciliation within his own self and personality' would seem to absorb both objective 'powers' and subjective will into a yet higher spiritual consciousness. Hegel notes attempts to 'find a Christian tone' in the play—but will not himself go so far. For Christian reconciliation comes when 'the heart itself [becomes] ... the grave of the heart' and the self fully spiritualized. Oedipus' final happiness, by contrast, comes not from dying to the

²¹² LA 2.1217–18. Hegel's praise of the *Antigone* as 'the most magnificent and satisfying work of this kind', ancient or modern, may draw on his assumption that Sophocles composed organic trilogies, in which the 'collision' of the second play is resolved in the third (2.1167; cf. 1.204). In fact, *Antigone* is a stand-alone play. Its stark ending—Creon shattered by the deaths of Haemon, Eurydice, and Antigone herself—offers (to my mind) little obvious reconciliation of the 'powers' of family and city. Thinking of his trilogies and conviction in an ethico-religious evolution over time, Kaufmann insightfully names Aeschylus, not Sophocles, as 'the tragic poet whose world view most closely resembled Hegel's' (1968: 203). Hegelian-style antinomies and their resolution structure Aeschylean readings by Solmsen (1949: 146–7), Vellacott (1961: 7), and could be extended to *Prometheus Vincitus*, if its trilogy did work out a reconciliation of Prometheus' *philanthrôpia* and Zeus' power (Hegel mentions *Prometheus Vincitus* in 1.493, but treats Prometheus primarily through Hesiod and Plato (1.460–2, 469–70)).

²¹³ LA 2.1218–19. *Philoctetes*: 1.226, 1.579, 2.1204. Goethe's 'masterpiece' (2.1204) praised over Euripides' work: 1.228–30.

²¹⁴ LA 2.1219–20. A fourth may appear in PS §753: reconciliation in the higher perspective of the modern audience, which (like the girl who can fully appreciate the beautiful fruit that historical Fate drops before her) sits above the tragic conflict and both sympathizes with and deplores the protagonists' one-sided *pathê*, realizing that as individuals they must perish, but their animating principles will remain—in the integrating minds of the viewers, and the 'certainty of itself' that Spirit has gained 'from the crushing of gods and men'.

particular, but from his learning that Athens will grant him a grave and posthumous honours. His 'transfiguration' is from 'the strife of ethical powers and the violations involved, into the unity and harmony of the entire ethical order itself'. Namely, Oedipus' final wisdom is more akin to the happy reconciliations of *PR* than the spiritual joy of true *theōsis*. And yet—the fact that Hegel does dwell on a Christian interpretation is revealing: *Oedipus Coloneus* is the *last* tragedy to appear before his discussion of comedy, suggesting that Oedipus' transfiguration does at least point towards the irrepressible spirit celebrated in Old Comedy and definitively achieved by Christianity.

Resolution, as in *OC*, ideally emerges as the organic outcome of conflict, and as such it becomes for Hegel the third, and necessary, moment of tragic art. In explicating this, he explicitly claims to give the true interpretation of Aristotle's *katharsis*, *hamartia*, and *anagnōrisis*.²¹⁵ For Aristotle, tragedy's final goal is the evocation and *katharsis* of fear and pity. For Hegel, if these emotions are to be aesthetic, they cannot be *merely* subjective and naturalistic. Particular natural events are not in themselves tragic, and mere misfortunes, mistakes, or oversights provoke only pity and the desire to help; wilful crimes invite neither. When the tragic protagonist suffers, one pities him more specifically as a 'man of worth and goodness'—implicated in suffering not by some sin, crime, misfortune, or blindness (i.e. *hamartia*) but driven rather to conflict by his own pure *pathos*. The hero's 'mistake' (as it were) is the half-admirable one of premature conviction: what one pities through his one-sided truth is the self-diremption of the ethical whole.²¹⁶ The metaphysical background looms larger in the case of tragic fear. In watching a play, spectators do not fear that similar misfortunes will happen to *them*. Such particular, naturalistic fears melt, rather, into a higher awe before the 'power of the Absolute... the might of the ethical order' itself. This is akin to Lessing's 'cosmic shudder', tackling themes that Aristotle strangely ignores: the gods' will, the interweaving of oracular necessity and individual freedom, the all-embracing power of Fate. In all, then, tragic pity

²¹⁵ Hegel's treatment of *mimēsis* and *katharsis* in *PS* makes him one of 'the last great Aristotelians', according to Billings (2014: 163ff). For Hölsle (1984: 25) and Gellrich (1988: 15), Hegel's tragic collision (i.e. of opposing *actions*) reworks Aristotle's definition of tragedy as 'imitation of serious *action*' (*Poetics* 1449b24); cf. Speight 2001: 46–8.

²¹⁶ Reworking of Aristotle *Poetics* 1449b on pity, fear: *LA* 2.1197–8; cf. 1.212, 2.1215 (protagonists do not solicit pity for *themselves*). Implicit correction of Aristotle's *hamartia* (*Poetics* 1452b30–1453a17): tragic conflict does *not* arise from 'an evil will, crime, infamy, or mere misfortune, blindness', let alone from 'so-called "morally noble" criminals' (2.1212–13). On these themes, and their many interpreters, Munteanu 2011 is informative.

and fear before Fate become aspects of the audience's inchoate feeling of the Absolute, the true universal as it differentiates itself into chorus, 'lyric' protagonists, and their conflict, and then sucks all back into itself in the final resolution.²¹⁷ A terrifying unknown for the protagonists, Fate is recognized in the end to have been immanent from the beginning. Again, what tragic pity and fear afford is a 'glimpse of eternal justice':²¹⁸ an aesthetic reconciliation to reality in all its conflict, suffering, and negativity. This—and not the protagonists' insight into their *particular* identity—is the true *anagnōrisis* and knowledge gained from tragedy:

only with such a conclusion can the necessity of what happens to the individuals appear as absolute rationality, and only then can our hearts be morally at peace: shattered by the fate of the heroes but reconciled fundamentally. Only by adherence to this view can Greek tragedy be understood.²¹⁹

A corollary to the 'absolute rationality' of Hegel's *tragoedia* comes in his comments on the Aristotelian 'unities'. In Hegel's view, the French theorists were overzealous in reading the unities of time and place into Aristotle's *Poetics*, but their ideas can still be accepted, not as fixed rules, but as useful recommendations: they may bolster the unity of action and make the play more 'Classically' immediate, less 'Romantically' diffuse.²²⁰ Nevertheless, unity of action is the one properly Aristotelian unity, 'the truly inviolable law'. Though Hegel does not reflect on each of Aristotle's various remarks in this regard—how a play should have a beginning, middle, and end; how each incident should follow its predecessor in plausible sequence; how each action should be characteristic of its doer; how plot (*mythos*) is 'the soul' of tragedy, its principle of movement and growth, out of which each incident should grow organically²²¹—nevertheless, these remarks are clearly absorbed into his tripartite analysis. In Hegel's view, Greek tragedies are indeed organic unities, because they mirror the dynamic unity of being itself: the chorus is particularized, as it were, into protagonists whose characteristic

²¹⁷ See LA 2.1160–3.

²¹⁸ LA 2.1198.

²¹⁹ LA 2.1215; cf. 2.1203. The pleasure afforded by aesthetic pity and fear is broached in 1.32; on tragic pleasure, see Nuttall 1996, Belfiore 1992, Saadi Liebert 2017, with reference ultimately to passages like Aristotle *Poetics* 1448b8–17.

²²⁰ LA 2.1164–6: Aristotle only discusses unity of action, mentions 'very occasionally' unity of time, and ignores unity of place.

²²¹ Unity of action as 'inviolable law': LA 2.1166. On plausibility and plot, see *Poetics* 1450a; cf. 2.1178–9.

passions determine all the actions and incidents of the subsequent conflict, right up to its eventual resolution. In this ideal case, the 'soul' of the play is not plot so much as Spirit—grounding each character, action, incident as a moment integral to the whole. If this is a fair extrapolation, Hegel's UPI analysis of tragedy does indeed absorb Aristotle's, while tackling, in addition, the chorus, gods, Fate, and tragedy's relations to other poetic genres.

Attic tragedy and comedy were traditionally separate genres. Speculations by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle about their common root—in a universal poetic *technē*, or in the human penchant for imitation—are reworked more determinately in Hegel's dialectic, which understands comedy as both the opposite of tragedy, and its sister art or inner 'truth'. As for Aristotle, comedy deals irreverently with the prosaic, plebeian present, as opposed to tragedy's solemn and poetic aristocratic past.²²² But for Hegel comedy begins where tragedy ends: with the 'absolutely reconciled and cheerful heart'. Hence, while Hegel's tragic *personae* can gain a measure of reconciliation only after they suffer their fate, comedy's characters enjoy from the start a 'constant reconciliation'. Through all the tumble of experience, a 'frank joviality' buoys them up, and come what may, they whistle an 'all is well with me'.²²³ With a glance at the comic situations of *Clouds*, *Frogs*, *Knights*, *Ecclesiazusae*, *Thesmophoriazusae*, and *Peace*, Hegel takes Aristophanes as 'the comic author par excellence' and sketches a threefold typology of the genre, centred on the contradiction between the ends and means chosen by the hero. His comic hero envisions some end, either ridiculous or substantial, and pursues it with means either adequate or laughable: the comedy and humour reside in the clash or disjunction between his 'big idea' and the various ways in which this grand design is frustrated or accomplished.²²⁴ Failure or success do not much matter, for in

²²² Tragedy, comedy 'opposites': *LA* 2.1220. Unity of tragedy, comedy: Plato *Symposium* 223d, Aristotle *Poetics* 1447a8–16. Low or 'prosaic' comic characters: Aristotle *Poetics* 1448a16–18, 1449a32–4, *LA* 2.1220–1. Hegel develops an Aristotelian theory of comedy: A. Paolucci 1978, H. Paolucci 1970.

²²³ Reconciled heart: *LA* 2.1220. Joviality, constant reconciliation: 2.1235. 'All is well': 2.1222; cf. H. Paolucci on Hegelian comedy as 'the ultimate aesthetic *catharsis*' (1970: 201). Whitman's exploration (1964: 21–58) of the 'boundlessness' defining the comic hero (23) is not wholly dissimilar to the subjective 'infinity' of Hegel's figures.

²²⁴ Aristophanes the comedian: *LA* 2.1233. The disjunction between *substantial* end and particular *subjective* characters who realize it leads to three possible comic situations (*LA* 2.1200–1; cf. Law 2000: 117–18): (1) both goal and means are unworthy—not very promising material (Hegel gestures towards themes in Aristophanes' *Wealth*); (2) the goal is good, but the means bad—Hegel's favoured situation (e.g. Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae*: 2.1201); and (3) both goal and means are good but thrown into 'comic contrast' by circumstances (2.1201). Hegel's rough sketch is reworked extensively in Roche 1998. 'Big idea': Stanford 1958: xxv.

comedy what really counts are not *objective* ends but the *subjective* disposition that produces and embraces all ends and means as part of its own ebullient self-assurance: at the centre of comic joy is the 'absolute freedom of spirit which is utterly consoled in advance in every human undertaking'.²²⁵ Before this freedom and the irresistible power of laughter, all objectivity is dissolved. The comic hero laughs at anything and everything: city, politicians, gods, Euripides, the war, women, men, himself.²²⁶ Such dissolving laughter can have a corrosive effect, and the universal mockery of Old Comedy is a 'great symptom' and cause of the decline of Greek *Sittlichkeit*, roughly contemporaneous with Sophistic relativism. At the same time, Hegel is at pains to justify his Aristophanes as a 'real patriot' who abides 'within this objective and substantial sphere' and only laughs at the 'absolute contradiction' between universals and their imperfect embodiment in particulars.²²⁷ Humour (in Hegel's analysis) is consciousness of contradiction as a perennial fact, and what distinguishes the comedian from the satirist is the ability to discern contradiction in oneself as well.²²⁸ Comedy, therefore, is a superlatively self-reflexive genre and Aristophanes' plays exemplify its 'fundamental principle' of being able to *laugh at oneself* through all one's contradictory misfortunes and triumphs.²²⁹ In this sense, Aristophanes was the 'master' in creating truly comic characters; through them, the aesthetic democracy of Athens could laugh at its own foibles—laugh even at its own laughter, and so attain an 'absolute freedom'.²³⁰ For to laugh at X is to negate its seriousness, and to laugh at one's laughter is akin to the negation of negation and infinite self-reflexivity, that for Hegel are pivotal to spiritual development.²³¹ Here is the highest of those moments when 'art

²²⁵ LA 2.1221.

²²⁶ 'Utterly consoled': LA 2.1221. Objects of laughter: 2.1221–2; cf. PS §§744–7 (gods), LP 1.427–8 (Socrates).

²²⁷ LP 1.428, 2.1222. That Aristophanes was a patriot is a staple of older criticism (e.g. Guthrie 1971: 3.49–50).

²²⁸ This may be humour as 'incongruity', in Lowe's categorization (2007: 1–12).

²²⁹ 'Fundamental principle': LA 2.1233.

²³⁰ 'Master': LA 2.1220. 'Absolute freedom': 2.1221. Hegel's demand that comic heroes laugh at themselves is developed by A.C. Bradley 1965: 247–75 and W.J. Desmond 1992.

²³¹ 'Like the dialectical processes of the universe itself, comedy achieves its aims through "negation"' (Law 2000: 114). Indeed, the Hegelian cosmos may have a comic logic: the unity of Being and Nothing may seem like a 'joke' (EL §86A1); SL is for Brecht 'one of the most humorous works of world literature', as the concepts come out in pairs, and like any comic duo beat and contradict each other until they fall into each other's arms, friends again—'sublimated' in a deeper identity (1961: 109–10); and Hegel finds contradictions or irony in 'the matter itself', in jokes, and in the truly comic mind (LP 1.427–8). Curiously Hegelian in tone, therefore, is Stanford on Dionysus in *Frogs*: 'a kind of personified *Oxymoron*, self-contradictory but with a kind of irrational reason' (1958: xxix); cf. C.H. Whitman 1964: 42–3.

points beyond itself': in the self-reflective humour of Aristophanes and the 'perfect enjoyment of itself in loss', Hegel hears fore-notes of the even deeper reconciliation wrought through the Christian Resurrection.²³² As with Classical sculpture, Christianity becomes for him the 'truth' of Old Comedy, just as it is the 'truth' and *telos* of tragedy and indeed all Classical poetry: Aristophanes' 'pictures of a naïve fundamental "all is well with me" are the *final great outcome* of the poetry of this gifted, civilized, and ingenious Greek people'.²³³

With this statement, Hegel ends his discussion of ancient comedy, and moves on to modern drama—giving over a stingy fourteen pages to the topic, with constant references back to ancient models, and even summing up Shakespeare's comic genius as a revival of the Aristophanic, with a dash of Romantic subjectivity.²³⁴ There is a sense, then, that Aristophanic comedy is the *telos* of art *per se*, and that with the end of Old Comedy, art itself was spent as the highest form of expression. Certainly, Aristophanes' immediate successors do not impress Hegel. Judging from his comments, he seems to have really enjoyed Aristophanes' rude, rambunctious humour, so incredible and alien to 'our German seriousness'.²³⁵ Yet this moment of 'private serenity' before an outer world that is still loved for all that it is—this moment of perfect Aristophanic reconciliation—is an aesthetic one, and therefore finite and temporary. Within time, it rises above the corruptions of the time, manifesting an absolute freedom that it feels yet cannot explain.

The strengthening demand for theoretical self-understanding would split the inner and outer, and in the more alienated world of Hegel's Rome, comedians like Plautus and Terence come into their own.²³⁶ Their comedies of intrigue enter even more closely into the negativities of prosaic existence, with deceptions, rapes, and thefts, which they eventually contrive to reconcile in

²³² Art points beyond itself: *LA* 1.103. 'Perfect enjoyment' in loss: *LP* 1.428; cf. W.J. Desmond 1992: 273–81.

²³³ *LA* 2.1222 (*letzten großen Resultate*, italics added); in *PS* §§744–7, too, Comedy appears as the final form of the Greek *Kunstreligion* and is juxtaposed with Christian subjectivity.

²³⁴ Shakespeare is paradigmatic for modern comic drama, but Hegel prefers not to go into detail and simply asserts that he revived Aristophanes' spirit—the 'good humour, assured and careless gaiety despite all failure and misfortune, exuberance and the audacity of a fundamentally happy craziness, folly, and idiosyncrasy'—though with 'deeper wealth and inwardness of humour' (*LA* 2.1235–6).

²³⁵ *LA* 2.1221. 'Our German seriousness': *LP* 427; cf. Pinkard on Hegel's 'jocular side' (2000: 379), his humour more 'sarcastic' than droll (452–3).

²³⁶ Hegel does not mention Menander: Meinecke's Berlin editions of comic fragments (1839–57) post-date Hegel; Menander's *Dyscolus* and other longer fragments were rediscovered in the twentieth century.

a happy ending. Anticipating modern subjectivity, they fall under Hegel's Romantic genre of 'drama'—the direct predecessors of modern comedy.²³⁷ Less standard is Hegel's attempt to find a synthesis of tragedy and comedy in both New Comedy and its immediate predecessor, 'Greek and Roman satyric dramas'. These dramas, with their comic satyr-chorus and serious 'if not tragic' action, are Hegel's one, vague allusion to a genre little known in his time.²³⁸ On the other hand, he quotes with interest the prologue of Plautus' *Amphitruo*, where Mercury transforms tragedy into comedy, or rather both into a *conmista Tragicocomoedia*.²³⁹ Unlike Aristophanes' characters, however, those of Plautus, Terence, and Molière cannot laugh at themselves.

This absence of 'frank joviality' is even more prominent in what, implicitly following Quintilian, Hegel accepts as Rome's sole indigenous art-form, satire. This bears some relation to comedy, but being non-dramatic is categorized rather as the final, half-prosaic species of lyric poetry, as it pits a 'thinking spirit', filled with the passion of an abstract indignation, against all 'the corruption of the present'.²⁴⁰ The satirist's rage is complete: standing aloof from society, his poetic *persona* sits in mocking judgment of all its customs, institutions, heroes, gods—everything, except himself.²⁴¹ Here is a different sort of laughter, bringing no reconciliation with the world, but only ever greater fury unassuaged. The comic character's boundless self-confidence hardens into the closed self-certainty of the universal mocker. As such, Roman satirists voice the alienated Roman spirit, and bear a family resemblance to ancient sceptics, closed in their empty self-certainty. The satirist too is a hollow man: he has no determinate grasp of the ideal against which he measures the inadequate present, no positive vision apart from superficial praise of the past and an abstract rhetoric of virtue. Yet his satirical thoughts implicitly assert the absolute superiority of thinking itself, and like scepticism, his extreme negativity invites its own negation: another

²³⁷ See LA 2.1202–4, 2.1235; cf. Law 2000: 121.

²³⁸ Euripides' *Cyclops* was known (e.g. P.B. Shelley's 1819 translation) but goes unmentioned in LA; Sophocles' fragmentary *Trackers* was rediscovered in 1912.

²³⁹ Plautus' *Amphitruo* 52–9 quoted: LA 2.1203.

²⁴⁰ LA 1.513.

²⁴¹ On satire, see esp. LA 1.512–16; Hegel's association of satire with prose recurs in e.g. Conte 1994: 302. Quintilian: 10.1.93 (*satura quidem tota nostra est*). Source in 'passionate indignation' of a 'thinking spirit': LA 1.513; cf. Juvenal's programmatic *facit indignatio versum* (*Satires* 1.79). Universal mockery: cf. Juvenal *Satires* 1.85–6 (*quidquid agunt homines*). In arguing for the continuity between satire and Old Comedy, Ferriss-Hill 2015 makes poetic 'truth-telling' her main category, neglecting Hegel's focus on comic self-reflexivity. Hegel's satirist also tells the truth, but as a sublimely scornful sceptic, a more ambiguous figure than Hugo's great-souled 'hater of evil' and 'ocean man' (see Highet 1961: 227–9).

predecessor for the absolute affirmations of Christianity.²⁴² As a transitional form (*Übergangsform*) between the classical Ideal and Christian-Romantic subjectivity, satire is dimly foreshadowed in the iambs, choriambi, and scazons of Archilochus and Hipponax. Nevertheless, Hegel's Greeks are not natural satirists, and as a Syrian Greek, Lucian is somewhat more 'cheerful' than the native Romans, among whom the genre realizes its highest vocation.²⁴³ Horace is the master here, his *Satires* most 'poetic' as they evoke a world dissolving in its own folly. A more mechanically external viewpoint is taken by Hegel's Juvenal and Persius as they rant from their angry perches. The satirical spirit infects Rome's historians also. For Livy and Sallust, Rome's virtuous past becomes an abstract ideal to berate the degeneracy of the present: a note that comes to full stridency in Tacitus, filled with rage and gloom at the decline and failures of the Roman world.²⁴⁴

3.3. Finale: The End of Art?

Half-way to moralistic prose, satire is the last ancient genre in Hegel's *LA*. And yet, as if preferring happy endings, he returns in conclusion to Aristophanic reconciliation—the 'final great outcome' of Greek poetry, and perhaps even of art itself. For if Old Comedy (along perhaps with the romantic comedies of Shakespeare, that modern Aristophanes) is the truth of drama, which as the culmination of poetry (itself the culmination of the arts) expresses 'beauty in its most complete and profound development',²⁴⁵ then the inference seems to follow: the 'end of art' is to be located in the age of Aristophanes. This is a considered, and neglected, thesis.²⁴⁶ It is true that in one sentence Hegel may echo August Schlegel in writing that 'we may well

²⁴² Hegel's Roman satire becomes, in Roche's reworking, the 'comedy of absolute irony', in which 'subjectivity dominates' but has no explicitly objective norms (1998: 330). Hegelian satire points to Christianity; Roche finds in Beckett, Ionesco, Wilde, Kafka a 'metacomedy of absolute irony, in which the negation of negativity leads to a hidden and complex affirmation' (330).

²⁴³ Possible allusions to Archilochus, Hipponax: *LA* 2.1151.

²⁴⁴ *Übergangsform*: *LA* 1.514. Roman historians, satirists compared: Keane 2012, Uden 2015: 42–50.

²⁴⁵ *LA* 1.205. A classicist might add that Old Comedy embraces the greatest range of metres, contents, registers, and styles (e.g. 'paratragic' elements): no other ancient poetic form could be so universal and self-reflexive without compromising itself.

²⁴⁶ 'Few have taken more than a passing interest in his [Hegel's] claim that comedy is the absolute *telos* of artistic expression', a *telos* which Law examines in two senses, as 'the ultimate aesthetic experience' and as '*die Aufhebung* of aesthetics' (Law 2000: 113).

hope that art will always rise higher and come to perfection'.²⁴⁷ This sentence especially has been taken as anticipating or justifying later artistic innovations.²⁴⁸ Yet Hegelian ideality is not abstract minimalism: earlier art-forms (architecture, sculpture) and styles (Symbolism) are 'abstract' in that they *abstract* from a more complex totality, and must yield to ever more inclusive forms and styles. Abstract painting that reduces the complex to 'constituent' geometric shapes and primary colours hardly squares with Hegel's admiration for Venetian and Dutch carnation; Cubist sculpture would represent a reversion to the abstractly Symbolic. Of course, Rodin, Picasso, and others did find new modernities in the 'primitive', as well as in the Classical.²⁴⁹ But that Hegel, mind rooted more in the past, would be unenthused by these possibilities, the continuation of the quoted sentence leaves little doubt:

...the form of art has ceased to be the supreme need of the spirit. No matter how excellent we find the statues of the Greek gods, no matter how we see God the Father, Christ, and Mary so estimably and perfectly portrayed: it is no help; we bow the knee no longer.

The passage crystallizes a leitmotif of this chapter: the classical Ideal—the 'peak', the 'perfection', 'zenith' and 'consummation of the realm of beauty'²⁵⁰—emerged variously (Hegel thought) in the Greek temple, Classical sculpture, Umbrian painting, and less obviously in Homeric epic, Pindaric odes, Sophoclean tragedy, Aristophanic comedy, perhaps even Rossini's arias. After these peak moments, art and artists will remain, but much diminished, unable to speak with the same power to modern people whose mentalities, institutions, and lives are pervaded by the prose of conscious intellection. Philosophy paints its grey on grey: 'laws, duties, rights, maxims', and (one might add) formulae, statistics, historical

²⁴⁷ LA 1.103. A. Schlegel: 'Poetry, as the fervid expression of our whole being, must assume new and peculiar forms in different ages' (1876 [1809]: Lecture III).

²⁴⁸ LA 1.103. Given the many-faceted nature of LA, the responses to Hegel's 'end-of-art thesis' are legion: Henrich 1966 and Danto 1997 are seminal; Bungay 1984: 71–89, Houlgate 1997, and Donougho 2007 include helpful overviews. One trend is to apply Hegelian aesthetics to construe or justify *later* artistic innovations, such as the 'modernism' of Manet (Pippin 2014: 27–62) or the increasing 'ideality' of non-representational and even non-physical art (Rutter 2010); cf. Gaiger 2006. By contrast, Houlgate dissociates Hegel from abstractionism (2000: 71–5, 2007: 78–82), while Squire recalls Hegel's essential classicism ('Hegel's triadic system for charting the history of art boils down to the history of the pre-Greek, Greek and post-Greek', 2018: 146; cf. 2011).

²⁴⁹ See Prettejohn 2012.

²⁵⁰ LA 1.517.

associations, and -isms so imbue modern minds that they lose touch with sensuous immediacy, and can no longer fully enter into that aesthetic mood in which 'the universal . . . gives the impression of being one with the senses and the feelings'.²⁵¹ The artist is caught up in this creeping grey, and though he may flee to the woods, 'the people', the past, or to new mythologies of Romantic imagining, he too

stands within the world of reflection and its relations, and could not by any act of will and decision abstract himself from it; nor could he by special education or removal from the relations of life contrive and organize a special solitude to replace what he has lost. In all these respects art, considered in its highest vocation, is and remains for us a thing of the past. (LA 1.11)

Such seeming pessimism about the future power of art has goaded many responses, not least among thinkers like Schelling, Nietzsche, and Heidegger. Yet while Hegel's 'scientific' attitude belongs to the Enlightenment drive for encyclopedic explanation—the aesthetic too is intelligible in the light of the Idea, and is subsumed in it—it is also indirectly informed by an ancient trope. Winckelmann's periodization of art echoed Pliny the Elder's curt verdict that when Alexander the Great extinguished Greek freedom, 'then art ceased'. Others write of the end of literary art, often associated with the loss of political freedom: Aristophanes' *Frogs*, Timon of Phlius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Tacitus, 'Longinus'.²⁵² In Hegel's world-historical scheme, each people freely cultivates the art-form most expressive of its spirit, but in the slow accumulation of cultural memory, later peoples grow ever less spontaneous, their lives and societies increasingly mediated by concepts, their arts correspondingly less sensuous. As *Erinnerung* diminishes the sense of awe before art-works' sensual presence, the solid forms of Oriental architecture and Greek sculpture melt into the more ethereal ones of Christian painting and Romantic music; in poetry, the sensuous element ultimately dissolves into rhythmic vocalizations in

²⁵¹ LA 1.10.

²⁵² Pliny: *Naturalis Historia* 34.52 (*deinde cessavit ars*); cf. 35.2. The 'anxiety of influence', sharpening fears that poetry has ceased to be, shadows passages such as Aristophanes *Frogs* 92–7 and *passim*, Choerilus of Samos SH 317 and Timon SH 786 (both in Hopkins 1988: 1, 5), Dionysius *De Antiquis Oratoribus* 1.1, Tacitus *Dialogus* 1, [Longinus] *On the Sublime* 44. See Kennedy on the 'decline of eloquence' as perceived by both Greek and Roman authors (1994: 187–92); here Velleius Paterculus' theory of a 'progression of the genres' (1994: 188) bears comparison with Hegel's aesthetic (as well as the Russian formalists mentioned by Kennedy).

the mind of the reader. As for Winckelmann and Pliny, the end of a world-historical form of freedom ensures the end of its special art-form.

We have suggested in passing how for Hegel the heyday of each of the arts is over, but let us recapitulate. Architecture reached one summit in certain holy buildings of the Orient, but it was in the classically harmonious Greek temple that it may have most fulfilled its essential 'vocation'—if indeed the Gothic cathedral points beyond the aesthetic *per se*, towards the higher insights of true religion. Focused on these pasts, Hegel hardly bends the knee to the *ersatz* temples of Schinkel's Berlin, and is positively scornful of the aesthetic vacuity of 'box-like' Protestant churches where pews are lined up 'like stalls in a stable'.²⁵³ Here aesthetic decline into purely functional buildings is bound up with religious progress, for the Protestant cult of the word surpasses Gothic spires and stained glass. Singularly unimpressed by Roman, Renaissance, and neoclassical imitations, Hegel harbours no Winckelmannian hopes that the spirit of Greek sculpture can be revived: the Roman and Christian mind is simply not drawn to 'the classical form of the ideal which is the first and highest vocation of sculpture'.²⁵⁴ The fragments of Greek statues may indeed still have the power to 'astonish posterity', and in the 'reclining river god' (perhaps the Ilissus on the Parthenon pediment), 'one of the most beautiful products preserved to us from antiquity', a weary spirit can always return for refreshment. Before the grandeur of ancient fragments, those 'shadows of a magnitude', Keats and Fuseli felt crushing mortality, Winckelmann melancholy, Schlegel 'enthusiastic adoration': Hegel acknowledges that they can still bewitch the modern viewer, but suggests that that rapture will modulate into the less sensuous 'reproductions' of philosophical art-history.²⁵⁵ The paintings produced for temples, churches, *palazzi*, and houses were in Hegel's time beginning to be organized chronologically in museums, and of Leonardo, Raphael, Correggio, and Titian, he writes that 'the perfection of painting in these great masters is a peak of art which can be ascended only once by one people in the course of history's development'.²⁵⁶ If *that* 'Classical' perfection occurred among Raphael's Italians, it will not recur among later neoclassical

²⁵³ LA 2.684–5; cf. 2.692.

²⁵⁴ LA 2.790.

²⁵⁵ River god: LA 2.724. 'The scanty remains still astonish': LH 260. Keats's 'shadows': 'On Seeing the Elgin Marbles'. Fuseli: 'The artist moved to despair at the grandeur of antique fragments'. A. Schlegel: 'All men of any degree of taste bow with enthusiastic adoration before the masterly productions of ancient sculpture' (1876 [1809]: Lecture III). Winckelmann: 2006 [1763]: 251–64. Compare Hegel with Burkert's doubts about the waning 'spell' of images (1985: 4).

²⁵⁶ LA 2.882. Museums: Sheehan 2000: 62–81.

and Romantic painters. Before them, Hegel's Lutherans would hardly 'bow the knee'. Of course, many contemporaries revered a Mozart or Mendelssohn for revealing new heavens, and Hegel accepts music as the quintessentially Romantic, 'modern' art. Yet he seems deaf to the absolute music of Beethoven and other latter-day Orpheuses, and though he *may* turn to Rossini of 'old' Italy for a *joie de vivre* reminiscent of the cheerful Greeks, nevertheless making or listening to music hardly constitutes the 'highest act of Reason'. Nor is opera (a transitional form passing into its 'truth' in drama) the art of the future.

What of poetry, in the age of Goethe? To take the first poetic genre—epic is most emphatically a thing of the past for Hegel. It gets its genuine content only with the simple conditions of primitive societies: the cattle-raids, easy violence, boastful heroes, and self-willed gods. Homer is truest to the epic concept, but Virgil & Co are literary *ersatz*: Klopstock is not the Homer of Germany, Voss's translations are shadows of the original, and the genre effectively ends as Cervantes's Quixote rides out on an old nag to tilt against new, mechanical realities: epic heroes and Romantic chivalry become 'lunacy' in an age of state armies.²⁵⁷ Such a thesis echoes the *recusatio* of ancient elegists as they refuse to compose epic—too grand or too old-fashioned for 'modern' sophistication. Of course, war remains a perennial reality, and Hegel muses that a war between North and South America might afford material in the New World for a new epic.²⁵⁸ Was he thinking of a clash between the Protestant, individualistic North and Catholic, conservative South: the sort of clash of civilizations that he detected in the Trojan War, paradigm of all epic wars, and that he might well have projected onto the wars of the *conquistadores*, or the 'Indian wars' in the US? If so, he might have praised Timothy Dwight for giving the promised land of the new United States its own 'poetic bible' in the form of his epic poem, *The Conquest of Canaan* (1795), for it is certainly true that colonies have the pastoral conditions right for epic—the 'beautiful middle' of frontier conditions, raids, and folk ballads awaiting a synthesizing genius. But it is a possibility that Hegel, attention focused on the Homeric past, does not contemplate. America in his prophecy is 'the land of the future... a land

²⁵⁷ Non-literary, 'primitive' epics are best: LA 2.1077; cf. 2.1056, 2.1132. *Don Quixote* and 'lunacy': 1.196; cf. 1.591–2, 2.1107, and most of all 1.607–8 ('No Homer, Sophocles, etc., no Dante, Ariosto, or Shakespeare can appear in our day; what was so magnificently sung, what so freely expressed, has been expressed; these are materials, ways of looking at them and treating them which have been sung once and for all').

²⁵⁸ LA 2.1062.

of desire for all those who are weary of the historical lumber-room of old Europe'.²⁵⁹ Ancient epic is hardly integral to this American future. As for old Europe, Hegel is thankful that German poets have 'at last got away from the attempt to work up into national epic poems remote stories which no longer have any national interest for us'.²⁶⁰ If so what would he have thought of Southey's two laborious volumes on 'Roderick: Last of the Goths' (1814), or of the Tennysonian epics later in the century? Hegel does praise Goethe's *Hermann and Dorothea* for reviving the Homeric spirit in bourgeois miniature, and we cannot tell whether he might have admired prose 'epics' like *Moby Dick*, *War and Peace*, or *Ulysses* with their Homeric union of cosmic vision and microscopic detail.²⁶¹ More contemporary 'epics' like Blake's *America*, Wordsworth's *Prelude*, Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and *Don Juan* might well have earned judgments similar to those with which he categorizes Goethe's *Faust I*: not an epic so much as a 'lyric' drama and an 'absolutely philosophical tragedy'—designations that break 'logical' genre lines and point to the synthetic genius, i.e. the *decadence*, of the modern mind.²⁶²

That mind is perhaps most hospitable to lyric poetry. If all peoples sing, and the lyric impulse 'is renewed at every season' as 'every age strikes its new note of song and the earlier one dies away', then it would seem that lyric is in no danger of dying.²⁶³ Moreover, lyric proper arises later in national histories, as a subjective reaction against, and antidote to, the rising prose of culture. Then the lyric poet sings himself, and discovers in his own experience particular moments of universal import: such self-conscious lyric Hegel traces through Archaic Greece, late Republican Rome, the late Middle Ages,

²⁵⁹ LH 86–7; cf. 170–1, LA 2.1062, EM §392A. Agricultural colonies recapitulate earlier conditions: PR §248.

²⁶⁰ LA 2.274.

²⁶¹ *Hermann and Dorothea*: LA 2.1110 (cf. Butler and Seiler 1984: 422); Trevelyan judges it the 'crown of Goethe's Hellenism' (1941: 210, 215). Tennysonian epics: Hegel remains a major presence in Tucker's analysis of 'the very idea of epic' as he notes how nineteenth-century British writers were beset from the outset by a 'rash of doubts' about the very possibility of a modern epic (2008: 3).

²⁶² *Faust*: LA 2.1224; cf. 2.1152–3. Hegel touches on Terence's tragicomedy as proto-modern but does not examine the Hellenistic aesthetic of *polyeideia*, with its precedents in e.g. Plato, Euripides. The description of *Faust I* (Hegel died before *Faust II* appeared) as 'absolutely philosophical' inspired analyses from many early Hegelians. In reviewing such readings, Bubner points to resources in Hegel's LA 1.602–8 for *Faust II* as a post-Romantic, even post-artistic work of art (2003: 254–70). But might Hegel's stress here on *humour*, *irony*, the all-dissolving *caprice* and self-reflexive play of *Humanus* 'the holy' (esp. LA 1.606–7) be redolent for him of a post-Aristophanic art?

²⁶³ Every age sings: LA 2.1143–4; cf. 2.977, 2.1113–14, 2.1123–4 (lyric appears in practically all ages, especially the modern).

and the Romantic period. Indeed, the subjectivity defining lyric would seem to make the modern world the best time for it: the spirit of medieval and modern Christian peoples is explicitly likened to that of the lyric self, in that it too is 'forced to produce out of its own resources as its own what is substantive and objective'.²⁶⁴ For Hegel the boundless modern mind is 'reproducing' the shapes of all realities, and so the project of absolute idealism may be that which makes lyric 'especially opportune in modern times'²⁶⁵: both modern and lyric selves reproduce the world from their 'idea.' Such thoughts powerfully echo programmatic statements by Novalis and Friedrich Schlegel that the world must be romanticized and made 'poetic'.²⁶⁶

On the other hand, if the notion of the 'lyrical' modern self is more metaphorical than literal, then Hegel may be less than keen on poeticizing experience. In his historical survey, Pindar's odes sum up the Greeks' historical and religious experience in a sensuously powerful way: uniting song, mythology (and dance), they were spectacles with a public dimension relatively absent from the lyrics of a Horace, Klopstock, Goethe, or Schiller. In the Pindaric ode that sang the spirit of its times, lyric may well have attained its 'highest vocation', but that unique synthesis was soon overtaken by the art of drama, and by the yet more self-conscious outlook of Sophistic and Socratic thinkers. Analogously, Goethe was somehow able to translate his multifarious experience into song, but if modern culture, civil society, and states demand that individuals specialize, could it easily produce another Goethe, able to tackle everything from politics and biology to painting and poetry? Whether Goethe is an unrepeatable phenomenon, or a new modern *type*, Hegel does not say. Yet his own attempt at a *definitive* system of generic types suggests that in the course of its history poetry has run through *all* its logical possibilities: the self-thinking in Pindar's odes and Anacreon's songs was overtaken by Attic drama and Socratic philosophy, while the even more acute self-consciousness of Goethe's *Lieder* and

²⁶⁴ LA 2.1153; cf. Rutter 2010: 171 (lyric is for Hegel 'the pre-eminent modern voice or mode').

²⁶⁵ LA 2.1124 with 2.1152–3.

²⁶⁶ Novalis: 'Die Welt muss romantisiert werden' (in Uerling 2000: 51–2). F. Schlegel: ('Sie [die romantische Poesie] will... das Leben und die Gesellschaft poetisch machen' (in Uerling 2000: 79). Analogous is Schiller's celebrated statement to Goethe that he is tasked with 'recreating in your imagination... and thereby giving birth to Greece once more, as it were, from within'. This Goethean 'recreation from the idea' is echoed in Hegel's sense that Schiller's philosophical poetry proceeds as if from one 'grand fundamental thought' (LA 2.1146).

Schiller's intellectual poems seems to look beyond poetry altogether to the meditative spirit of Protestant Christianity and idealist philosophy.²⁶⁷

Decisive support for this conclusion might be found in Hegel's long, technical, and much neglected discussion of versification. In some twenty-five pages, Hegel argues that modern languages cannot reproduce the superlative rhythms of ancient Greek, and are therefore deficient poetically.²⁶⁸ To summarize the argument: Greek *rhythm*, determined by length of syllables, metrical accent, and caesura, produces a subtler variety of word-music and diffuses meaning across the line, thereby fusing sense entirely 'with the sensuous element of sound and temporal duration, so that this external element can be given its full rights in serenity and joy, and ideal form and movement can be made the sole concern'—a veritable 'Classical' synthesis of form and content, which is even likened to sculptural 'plasticity'.²⁶⁹ Post-classical medieval and modern *rhyme*, by contrast, concentrates meaning on stressed root words, effecting a far greater focus on meaning *independent* of sounds, and thus introducing an incipient split between ideas and their verbal medium. Hegel will therefore claim that Greek verse is 'most beautiful and richest', paradigmatic; rhyme, by contrast, 'is a thumping sound that does not need so finely cultivated an ear as Greek versification necessitates'.²⁷⁰ Hegel mentions how Klopstock, the older Voss, and Goethe attempted to revive ancient metres—with dubious success, for no abstract programme or act of will can entirely remake a language, reintroduce syllable lengths by position, and mitigate verbal accents.²⁷¹ Nor are the difficulties merely technical: wrought by centuries of cumulative change, modern languages are freer (e.g. in placing verbal accents) and more

²⁶⁷ Hegel concludes with a proclamation of comprehensiveness: 'we have arranged *every* essential category of the beautiful and *every* essential form of art into a philosophical garland' (LA 2.1236, italics added).

²⁶⁸ LA 2.1011–34.

²⁶⁹ LA 2.1022. Latin verse (allegedly) rests more on accent, tolerates rhyme more readily, and accommodated Greek models only by rigid application of 'fixed rules' of prosody (2.1024–5). Both rhythm and rhyme (like strictly musical beat) return the self to the same and so foster a sense of self-concentration (2.1016), but rhyme does so more forcefully than rhythm (2.1023). This subjective propensity of Latin converges with Christian interiority in the rhyming hymns of SS Ambrose and Augustine, and in the Leonine verses—a development that reflects Latin's 'tendency approaching the romantic character' (2.1024–5).

²⁷⁰ Paradigmatic beauty of Greek verse: LA 2.1026; cf. 2.978, 2.1150. 'Thumping' rhyme: 2.1028. Cf. 2.1019: even to hear Greek verse rhythms 'is a matter of great difficulty for our modern ear'.

²⁷¹ Klopstock, Voss, Goethe: LA 2.1017–18, 2.1031–4. Syllable lengths: 2.1015, 2.1019. Verbal accents: 2.1032.

'intellectualized'.²⁷² Consequently, the project of setting modern content to ancient technical forms (as in Goethe's classicizing poems, *Antiker Form sich nähernd*) seems in vain: 'it is not possible to achieve the plasticity of metre in the sterling way that classical antiquity did'.²⁷³ Hegel's implicit judgment on Weimar Classicism seems clear: not authentically 'Classical' at all, but rooted in the same spirit of Christian subjectivism as more obviously 'Romantic' productions. If modern languages themselves cannot accommodate the spontaneous complexity of Greek lyric, it would seem that for Hegel, the heyday of lyric is past. 'Classical' poetry is a thing of the past, contemporary 'Romantic' poetry is edging ever closer to self-conscious and philosophical abstractions: who now bows the knee in 'holy dread' before the *vates* or bard?²⁷⁴

What then of drama? Though Hegel honours Goethe and Schiller as supreme playwrights, many other remarks suggest that the material and form proper to tragedy will frustrate their efforts to translate ancient precedents to the modern stage: religious myth gives art its substantial content, but modern playwrights have no living body of myths from which to adapt situations and characters, and their imaginative effort to create them has resulted in 'only a few excellent dramas'; dreams of reviving Teutonic myths of some idealized *Deutschtum* are pathetically stupid; Greek mythology remains better known, yet stories of Iphigenia's sacrifice, Philoctetes' foot, and Greek religion generally, remain somewhat 'foreign to our modern way of looking at things'; the naïve reverence of the chorus inspires no answering chord now; modern audiences prefer characters as intricate as themselves; and because the clash of substantial interests is not an urgent issue in well-regulated modern states, dramatists must lower their sights to the intrigues of private life.²⁷⁵ The complex characters, situations, and tone of Romantic

²⁷² LA 2.1032.

²⁷³ LA 2.1032; cf. 2.1150 ('culmination' of lyric types in antiquity, with Greek lyric affording 'the perfect example' of the 'classical' fusion of universal and particular).

²⁷⁴ 'Holy dread': Coleridge, 'Kubla Khan'. As for satire, Hegel states baldly that Roman-style satire 'will not succeed any more', despite efforts by Cotta and Goethe to promote it (1.516)—or Jean Paul Richter's *Titan* (which he enjoyed in Heidelberg), or his own 'Who thinks abstractly?' He hardly touches Voltaire, and does not discuss other figures like Rabelais, Erasmus, or Swift, often included under the broad rubric of 'Menippean' satire. Nor does he mention August Platen's efforts at Aristophanic comedy.

²⁷⁵ Goethe's *Iphigenia in Tauris* (1779) praised: LA 2.1204; cf. 1.229–30. Its dramatic quality criticized: 2.1178. Mythic content artistically desirable in general: e.g. LA 1.174–6, 1.438. Without living mythology, 'only a few excellent dramas': 1.216–17. The idealized *Deutschtum* of Klopstock, Herder, Jacob Grimm, Lachmann, and others (Fuseli's Gothic) is mocked by Hegel as *Deutschdumm* ('German-dumb'): the *Nibelungenlied* (LA 2.1057) and *Poetic Edda* (2.1101) are irretrievably outdated, and he could stomach the *Nibelungenlied's* *Deutschtümerei*

literature are a particular source of vexation: Goethe's Werther and Weislingen, Jacobi's Woldemar, the ghostly obscurity in Hoffmann and von Kleist, seem to Hegel filled with 'nullity and indecision...trash'—in stark contrast with the strongly limned characters of Homer or Sophocles—while irony and other Romantic sins lie at the root of contemporary sentimentality, gothic fascinations, and 'the awful confusion of our taste which takes pleasure in anything and everything'.²⁷⁶ Shakespeare escapes these problems, but Shakespeare was 200 years in the past, and 'stands on an almost unapproachable height' which not even Goethe or Schiller have quite attained. As for comedy, what Aristophanes 'achieved to perfection' was revived by Shakespeare, but Hegel is so impressed by the spirit of Aristophanean exuberance that he seems to preclude the possibility that a new Aristophanes could arise in contemporary, strait-laced Germany.²⁷⁷ And despite an upsurge of interest in tragedy and 'the tragic', Hegel interprets reality as fundamentally untragic (in the Schopenhauerian sense): contradictions are resolved, suffering redeemed, Christian faith and philosophical science bring the joy of a deeper, permanent reconciliation.²⁷⁸

One genre remains as a possible candidate for the art of the future, an art of modernity. This is *not* abstractionism that asserts the independence of art from externality (nature, society), and of individual genres from each other. Rather, the *total work of art* would unite all arts in a supremely expressive whole, an aesthetic synthesis to symbolize and promote broader social integration. Such a *Gesamtkunstwerk* has had tremendous appeal. The masses and palaces of the Baroque, the people's festivals of the French Revolution and Republic, the utopian musical city of Berlioz ('Euphonia'), the politico-aesthetic spectacles of twentieth-century totalitarianism, rock festivals, cinema: the possibility of experiencing the 'truth' in full synaesthetic immediacy may well be more definitive of modernity than artistic

only 'by translating it into Greek' (Nicolin 1970: 130 (#146); cf. Pinkard 2000: 390–1). Greek myths more familiar, yet still 'foreign': *LA* 1.272–5, 2.1183. Modern characters cannot embody 'ethical powers': 2.1222–3 (*Macbeth*, *Hamlet* offer notable exceptions: 1.230–2).

²⁷⁶ 'Nullity and trash': *LA* 1.244. Goethe's 'youthful productions': 2.1228. Confused tastes: 2.1185; cf. 2.1189–90. Classical character: e.g. 1.187–8.

²⁷⁷ Shakespeare's height: *LA* 2.1227–8; cf. Schiller's 'Shakespeare's Ghost: A Parody' (1804), where (echoing Homer *Odyssey* 11, Aristophanes *Frogs*), the narrator descends to the Underworld and converses with Shakespeare/Hercules about the death of drama.

²⁷⁸ Emergence of 'the tragic': Billings 2014, Leonard 2015; cf. Schmidt 2001. Tragedy not fully possible in Judaeo-Christian culture: cf. Steiner 1961.

abstraction.²⁷⁹ Its most famous exemplification, of course, is Wagnerian opera: renewed Germanic myths are acted and sung to the backdrop of haunting music, elaborate costume, impressive stage-works, and week-long festivals through which the nation's elite absorb a transformative sense of their own historical destiny. Among Wagner's prime inspirations were Aeschylean drama, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony—and Hegel's aesthetics.²⁸⁰ It is highly intriguing, therefore, that an unpublished manuscript of *LA* proclaims opera as the truth of art: 'If then drama in all its facets becomes a complete artwork, then it is opera; opera appears as the perfectly developed artistic drama'.²⁸¹ Yet in *LA* as published, this vision is *not* pursued. Quite the contrary: Hegel associates opera with Italian song, and brusquely dismisses contemporary opera as a kind of musical bauble, with its extravagant costumes and décor.²⁸² More to the point, 'music is the chief thing' in opera:²⁸³ without compelling situations and characters, it cannot rival the spiritual greatness of drama where the chief thing

is not merely the human voice and the spoken word but the whole man who does not merely express feelings, ideas, and thoughts, but is involved with his whole being in a concrete action and works on the ideas, purposes, acts, and behaviour of others, and experiences corresponding reactions or asserts himself against them. (*LA* 2.1182)

In order to express 'the whole man in his body', drama must call upon 'almost all the other arts',²⁸⁴ for in the architectural setting of a theatre (or one conjured by scene painting), the actor enters like a living statue, speaking, singing, acting. Rosenkranz drives the point home:

[W]ith the theatrical realization of drama, which, as Hegel shows very well, lies inherently in its concept, all arts band together again to form a sisterly

²⁷⁹ On how the ideal of a total work of art haunted the European imagination from the French Revolution to the twentieth century, see D. Roberts 2011. Roche proposes that Hegel today would have endorsed film as 'the sensuous presentation of truth' (1998: 38–9).

²⁸⁰ Foster 2010 makes a powerful case for Wagner's debt to Hegel and his 'Grecocentric' aesthetics.

²⁸¹ Cited in Roche 1998: 346 n.72.

²⁸² *LA* 2.1190–1. Italians *the* people of music, i.e. opera, while 'northern peoples' cultivate these arts as laboriously as they would 'orange trees': 1.284. Offering some positive remarks on Mozart's operas, he does not mention contemporaries like Bellini (1801–35) and Donizetti (1797–1848), or contemporary works like Beethoven's *Fidelio* (1805), Rossini's *William Tell* (1829), and Auber's *La Muette de Portici* (1830).

²⁸³ *LA* 2.1191.

²⁸⁴ *LA* 1.1181.

wreath. Music, painting, architecture unite to sustain the actor as a poetically realizing statue that has come to life. Theater is the greatest aesthetic power that is at all conceivable. (cited in Roche, 1998: 39)

Nevertheless, drama is not necessarily the art of the Hegelian future either. Drama's *Aufhebung* of individual arts does not render them superfluous—but this is exactly what happens too often with modern plays. Namely, the fact that modern dramas are *written* for a *reading* public tends to make the stage and its aesthetic accoutrements so much superfluous paraphernalia. They can be discarded, and the play 'staged' in the mind of the reader—at the cost of the truly aesthetic.²⁸⁵ The Greeks' intuitions were sharper, and *their* tradition of composing for the living stage prompts Hegel to recommend that 'no play should really be printed but should remain, more or less as the case was in antiquity, in manuscript for the theatre's repertory and get only an extremely insignificant circulation'.²⁸⁶ If so, then even if a Goethe or Schiller does succeed in dramatizing 'divine' themes, their printed plays will have a muted *aesthetic* effect on *readers* scattered across the continent. Such remarks suggest, again, that for Hegel it was in the aesthetic community of Classical Athens, where civic architecture, epic myth, sculptural character, lyric song, and scene painting were brought together in plays for the whole people to enjoy and contemplate—it was *there* that art had its synaesthetic culmination. This would indeed be only consistent with Hegel's vision of the 'aesthetic democracy' of the *polis* and his canon that art be sensual (not conceptual), spontaneous (not studied), immediately appealing, and grounded in the spirit of the people who revere it.

Hegel was not alone in arguing that art cannot regain its high 'Classical' vocation. Winckelmann himself was ambiguous, both praising Greek art as the *ne plus ultra* and calling for its imitation and emulation. An ambiguous note of melancholy hope ends his *History*. Like a woman gazing out to sea at her departed lover, so the lover of ancient art searches the horizon of the past, but has 'as it were, only a silhouette of the object of our desires; but this awakens all the greater longing for that which we have lost'. Others abandoned their yearnings more unambiguously. For Herder, 'the genius of those times is gone' ('der Genius dieser Zeiten ist vorüber'), and the ancient Greek

²⁸⁵ LA 2.1187. That *reading* Greek tragedy is a merely abstract activity (2.707–80) Aristotle may not fully accept (*Poetics* 1450b16–20, 1462a11–12 with Munteanu 2011: 80–90).

²⁸⁶ LA 2.1183.

language that nourished it could no more be revived now than could Orpheus and Homer. In Herderian fashion Wilhelm Heinse (1746–1803) writes that ‘every race, every climate has its characteristic beauty, its own food and drink’: Greek art is not normative now, and so (he asks) ‘What is antiquity or posterity to us?’ Even more categorical is Phillip Otto Runge (1777–1810): ‘We are Greeks no more’ (‘Wir sind keine Griechen mehr’). For Schiller, the beautiful ‘gods of Greece’ have long abandoned the world to its present disenchantment. Goethe’s eventual disillusion with a modern ‘Classicism’ is symbolized in the marriage of Helen and Faust: their child Euphorion falls to his death, Helen fades again into the Underworld, and the long-sought union of modern and ancient dissolves as a Mephistophelean mirage.²⁸⁷

Hegel too says an equivocal ‘yes’ and ‘no’ to art, positively revering it as the sensuous intuition of Absolute Spirit, and relegating it to the past as an object of cooler contemplation. Contrary to the sometime ambitions of a Goethe or Hölderlin, ‘there is no longer any validity in the view that the honour of a nation requires it to have its Homer, and, into the bargain, its Pindar, Sophocles, and Anacreon’.²⁸⁸ But though those genre-masters cannot be resurrected, their works still express the spirit of their nation, of mankind and even Spirit itself, and so should remain part of the ideal, modern *Bildung*. Echoing strands of the Platonic tradition, as well as the Schillerian programme, Hegel’s lectures on art clearly affirm its educational value: art raises the mind above natural immediacy, liberates it from the limitations of the sensuous, ushers it through ‘monuments of its own magnificence’, and so prepares for the higher self-realizations of philosophy.²⁸⁹ So too, philosophy must complete itself with the history of art, for as the thinking of thinking, it must understand aesthetic thinking also, in its essence and individual manifestations: a fully concrete philosophy must evolve a philosophical history of art as an integral part of itself. Hegel’s own logico-historical narrative of the evolutions of the Ideal attempts both to appreciate art (via a quasi-Kantian canon) as spontaneously beautiful, and to think it as the historically mediated manifestation of the Idea. Hegel

²⁸⁷ Herder: *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*: 13.3 (‘Künste der Griechen’). Heinse: cited in Gilbert and Kuhn 1939: 312. Goethe’s *Faust*: see J.K. Brown 1986: 198–232.

²⁸⁸ *LA* 1.274.

²⁸⁹ Artistic *Nachahmung* yields to universal *Bildung*: ‘Art invites us to intellectual consideration, and that not for the purpose of creating art again, but for knowing philosophically what art is’ (*LA* 1.11); cf. Gethmann-Siefert 1992: 218–23.

attempts this balancing act at just the same time that the first art museums were appearing in Germany, a development that took inspiration from a matrix of similar assumptions: *now* art-works can migrate from their original habitats to museums, modern 'temples of art', where the vibrancy of original aesthetic communion can (ideally) be revived in a more comprehensive, contemplative setting.²⁹⁰ With equal optimism, Hegel seems to argue that artistic beauty can be migrated to thought, fully interiorized in a concretely historical philosophy of art, such that the loss of sheer sensuality is, for the infinite mind, no great loss. This would be a 'no' to art *qua* art, masquerading as a more resounding 'yes': the aesthetic form is lost, but the divine content remains, purified for higher appropriations. The beauty of art is 'beauty born of the spirit and born again'.²⁹¹ In this definition the educated mind will hear echoes of John 3:7—and appreciate how the divine beauty of art, whether in Greek sculpture or Aristophanic comedy, *always* points beyond itself to a yet higher mode of spirit. Art looks towards religion, and fades away before it after the Incarnation—the *Logos* of Christ, *the* 'perfect sensuous utterance'.

²⁹⁰ See Sheehan's survey of the trajectory from Kant's *Critique of Judgment* to Wackenroder's 'temples of art' and Hölderlin's 'aesthetic churches'—Romantic ideals that were objectified, via the influence W. von Humboldt and others, in Klenze's Glyptothek and Schinkel's Königliches Museum (now the Altes Museum), both opened in Autumn 1830 (2000: 43–82).

²⁹¹ LA 1.2.

4

Religion

Du gleichst dem Geist, den du begreifst,
Nicht mir!

—Geist der Erde, *Faust*

4.1. The Dialectic of Religions: God, Gods, and Worship

It was the least religious, and most religious, of times. Through the 1790s, the violently anti-clerical rhetoric of the *philosophes* finally spilled over into actual violence against religious orders, across France and revolutionary Europe. In February 1798, the French general Berthier took Pope Pius VI prisoner, abolished the Papal States, established a Roman Republic, and thus (to some contemporary observers) seemed to have finally exorcised the ‘ghost of the Roman Empire’. Yet the revolutionary zeal that would toss Christianity aside as a stale anachronism would also, in the audacity of its enlightenment, establish cults of ‘divine’ Liberty, Equality, and Reason. Evangelists of progress, ‘the people’, and Man were legion, while more hermetic types pursued their cults of Spinozistic nature, or Romantic art. At the same time, Judaism survived tenaciously, and denominations of Christianity both ancient and new flourished across Germany, Europe, and beyond. Hegel entered this maelstrom of possibilities as a born Lutheran. Orthodoxy cohabited uneasily with Romantic Hellenism during and after his time in the Tübingen seminary, and for the rest of his life, perhaps his greatest preoccupation would be to articulate definitively his ideas about God and gods. The Berlin lectures on religion settle on a Lutheran vision of modernity: Catholicism is a neo-Roman anachronism, while Lutheran Christianity is both the ‘truth’ of religion, and the ‘religion of truth’, synthesizing the essential insights of *all* previous religious evolution and expressing in picture-thought the logical Concept that is the sacred heart of reality. Hegel’s interpretation of Christianity has been controversial, alternately idolized as true and condemned as counterfeit. Its ambivalence

can be profitably illuminated (I suggest) if one places it within its larger world-historical context, and specifically in relation to the religions of Greece and Rome. These play perhaps *the* pivotal role in Hegel's narrative of religious evolution. His long study of religious antiquity informs his understanding of the Incarnation, while his developed Trinitarian theology in turn informs his mature reflections on Greek anthropomorphism and Roman practical religion. Ultimately, his system places Greek, Roman, and Christian in relation to an Aristotelian conception of God: a move that does some violence to these three traditions, even while it presages revolutionary consequences for conceiving the human.

Hegel's quest for the true perspective on religion began early, and embraced Greek and Roman sources almost from the start. His gymnasium essay *Über die Religion der Griechen und Römer*, for example, initiated an abiding, Herderian interest in a *Volksreligion* as that complex of beliefs spontaneously pervading a nation's whole way of life, free from hierarchies and dogma. This happy ideal became real in Archaic and Classical Greece, and in propounding his naïve position, the young Hegel allegorizes, euhemerizes, and psychologizes the Greek gods, in ways fairly conventional to the Enlightenment: the gods arose when natural forces and spheres were personified, or when heroes and culture bringers were divinized, or when human passions and relations were projected onto a heavenly screen. Only later did the Machiavellian cunning of the few add elements of hierarchy, secrecy, and taboo: holy statues were hidden away in temples, access to the oracles controlled. Still later, enlightened critique purified the divine of all-too-human characteristics and the God of the philosophers emerged as that moral, far-seeing being who 'has so ordered the nature of things that true happiness is achieved through wisdom and moral goodness'.¹

In Bern, Frankfurt, and Jena, Hegel explored more the revolutionary profundity of Christian love, with works such as *The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate* and *The Positivity of the Christian Religion*. The former understands early Christianity as having harmonized the sensuous beauty of Greek folk religion with the Kantian moral conscience: as it binds two into one, Christian love creates a uniquely spiritual beauty. In the *Positivity* essay, Jesus is a proto-Kantian teacher who kept religion firmly within the bounds of reason: no miracle-worker he.² Beyond Kantian debates,

¹ Cited in Harris, 1972: 33.

² Hodgson 2005: 22–31 surveys some of these essays (collected in Nohl 1907 and ETW).

evolutionary theories were germinating among figures like de Brosses (*Du culte des dieux fétiches*, 1760), and Christian Heyne, who postulated a progression of objects of worship from simple objects to mythological subjects: fetishes, trees, mountains, rivers, animals, heavenly bodies, nature itself, and eventually the personification of natural forces into a pantheon of gods. Such an evolutionary approach would have immense appeal through the nineteenth century: that appeal is evident in *PS* too, as Hegel traces an evolution of religions from Zoroastrian light, Indian pantheism, Egyptian theriomorphism, to the anthropomorphic Greek deities and Christ.

This triad of natural, aesthetic, and revealed religions would be amplified and revised in his Berlin lectures on the religions of world history. Religion (*LR* argues) culminates in Christianity, the 'infinite religion' which synthesizes the truths of all previous ones, and provides a Trinitarian form which is most adequate to the inner content of earlier 'finite' religions and religion itself. Christianity is Hegel's focus. Nevertheless, his immense labours over ten years, giving and revising the lectures, involved a bibliography that runs to at least 240 works, and of these sources, it has been estimated that two-thirds relate mainly to the 'determinate' or pre-Christian religions; indeed, his lectures afford almost as much space to these as to the 'concept' of religion and to Christianity *together*. As a result, one scholar 'senses a growing fascination with the history of religions' such that determinate religion 'rather than the concept of religion or the Christian religion, was at the cutting edge of Hegel's interest when he died in the fall of 1831'.³ Throughout his revisions, however, he never abandons the guiding triad of *PS* but makes one most significant change: Roman religion is inserted as the final, necessary matrix of Christianity. Thus, the lectures of 1821 graft *PS*'s triad of natural, aesthetic, and revealed religions onto the logical trinity of Being, Essence, and Concept: the divine is experienced as natural immediacy

³ Hodgson, 1987a: II.13. Estimates: Hodgson 1987a: II.1, 3–4; cf. 2005: 205–6). Hodgson's synopsis of Hegel's bibliography (1987a: II.3–12) notes Hegel's use of ancient sources for Africa (Herodotus), Persia (Herodotus, Plutarch), Egypt (he relies 'above all' on Herodotus, Plutarch, Diodorus, fairly ignoring recent Egyptological discoveries). Hegel's Egypt is thus almost entirely mediated through classical sources (and commentators like Guignaut, Creuzer, Dupuis, Heeren), though he knows well of Thomas Young, Champollion (*LH* 200–1) and the 'great Belzoni' (*LR* 2.546 (1827), *LH* 215), all near contemporaries. For Greek religion, by contrast, he had 'more resources at his disposal' than for any other (Hodgson 1987a: II.9). For Roman religion, 'Hegel relied primarily on only one secondary source...Karl Philipp Moritz's *Anthousa; oder, Roms Alterthümer* (1791)', even though his 'interpretation of Roman religion was diametrically opposed to that of Moritz' (11), a point demonstrated by Leuze 1975: 228; in *LR* Hodgson notes 'references or allusions' to Livy, Cicero, Virgil, Tacitus, Suetonius, Seneca, Dio, Plutarch, Ammianus, as well as Gibbon (II.12).

in Oriental religions, is progressively spiritualized as the divine 'essence' behind nature (Yahweh, Greek gods, Roman pantheon) and becomes fully 'concrete' and 'infinite' in Christianity. With minor shifts of emphasis,⁴ this overall evolution remains fundamentally constant through the subsequent lecture series of 1824, 1827, and 1831. Judaic, Greek, and Roman religions mediate between the nature-religions of the 'substantial' Orient and the spiritual 'subjectivity' of Christianity. And within this fixed structure, the imaginative poetry of Greek beauty is *always* opposed to the prosaic utilitarianism of the Roman understanding; Roman religion is *always* the final finite religion, the essential precursor and matrix of Christianity.⁵

Along with the evolutionary principle, another conceptual key carried over from *PS* to *LR* is the notion of the mutual determination of man and God. In *PS*, the divine reveals itself anthropomorphically to the Greeks, who in turn elaborate this intuition through a series of aesthetic means: statues shaped by human hands, oracular utterances articulated in human language, hymns sung by human voices, cult sacrifices performed by human votaries, as well as the mysteries, epics, athletic contests, the tragedies and comedies of the great dramatic festivals. All of these forms of the Greeks' aesthetic religion (*Kunstreligion*) see human beings shaping the divine through the medium of art. At the same time, the divine descends (as it were) to the ritual performance, giving shape to statues, inspiration for oracles, sustenance (Demeter's bread, Dionysus' wine) for consumption, deeds to be sung or acted out: mankind becomes the vessel for the divine's self-particularization in the world. Here is a double mediation, as human and divine shape each other towards the fuller actualization of both. Many considerations are at play here, theological, sociological, logical. *Theologically*, the mutual determination of the divine and human extends Hegel's Christian, specifically Lutheran perspective: God creates man in His own image, but it is through human history that God's will is done, that man becomes godlike—and God fully God. *Sociologically*, Hegel's earlier fascination with holistic *Volksreligion* is integrated into the language of self-developing spirit. Here, on the one hand, a

⁴ Notably in how to conceptualize Judaism: in 1824 Greek and Jewish religions appear as religions of 'spiritual individuality', but in 1827 have become religions of the elevation of spirit above nature, with the Greek 'religion of beauty' now *preceding* the Judaic 'religion of sublimity'—a revision that reflects an evolving appreciation of Judaism (Hodgson 1987b; cf. Stewart 2018: 200–1).

⁵ Invariant positioning of Roman religion: Hodgson 2005: 209, Labuschagne and Slootweg 2012: 163.

religion expresses a people's spirit—its deepest experiences, intuitions, and ideas of what is most true. In turn, this religion shapes their consciousness, social life, and history. A people's divinities are a Feuerbachian projection of their own being, yet have an objective force to shape their national life.

These theological and sociological formulations are not quite how Hegel summarizes the matter. In his logical language, a people's understanding of God—their divine 'concept'—is that inner *universal* which underlies and is developed by the *particular* diachronic aspects of their cultural world into its concrete *individuality*. This dialectical trajectory, variously formulated, yields beautiful symmetries: in terms of the EPS triad, the abstract universality of the logical Concept is associated with God the Father (Jewish Yahweh) as with Aristotle's *Noësis Noëseōs*, Böhme's *Urgrund*, and the intuition of divinity grounding *all* religions; the discrete particularities of Nature are associated with God the Son (Jesus Christ) as with the naturalism or purposiveness of pre-Christian, 'determinate' religions; while the Idea, as synthesis of universal Concept and particular being, corresponds with God as Spirit, who enters into the *cultus* of all religions, is operative in the inspired genius of artists, saints, thinkers, and even world-historical statesmen and generals, but finds its self-conscious realization in Pentecost and the 'real presence' of the Lutheran Eucharist. This quasi-Christian trinitarianism Hegel also detects in, or projects onto, each historical religion as its 'logical' core: the deepest, most universal concept of a people—its concept of 'the divine' (U)—pervades and comes to be known more determinately through myths, symbols, texts, and other manifestations (P), all of which come to a focus in the rituals and prayers of the concrete *cultus*, the forms of worship that unify a people most spiritually with their divine 'concept' (I).⁶

The UPI dialectic thus spans both the concept of religion itself, and its particular varieties. Because it does, Hegel will claim to reconcile the differences and continuities of historical religions. Each is unique and must be understood in its own terms, and yet each shares the same deeper rationality and thus looks forward to its *telos* in Christianity, whose own Trinitarian creed offers a form exactly mirroring the dialectical content

⁶ One might find structural similarities between Hegel's dialectic of religions (helpfully summarized in Labuschagne and Slootweg 2012: xviii–xxii) with the quasi-Biblical theory of an original revelation and a 'sacerdotal people' (i.e. the Abrahamic peoples) whose primitive monotheism gradually degenerated into polytheism before being restored in prophetic Judaism and Christianity: a theory of *Urmonotheismus* revived by Lang (1898), W. Schmidt (1912–54, 1939) and Stark (2007), and surveyed by Corduan 2013. Hegel himself rejects it as a 'widely current fiction' (LH 10–11).

of all religions. One might best, perhaps, appreciate Hegel's argument as a resolutely cosmopolitan application of the Patristic principle of 'divine accommodation'. According to this, God has appeared to each people in modes appropriate to their mentality and cultural level, so that beneath the seemingly crazy patchwork of mythologies and rites, the true God and His 'footprints' can be discerned by those with eyes to see.⁷ In Hegel's dialectic, this ancient theological principle is wedded to the more modern language of evolutionary continuity: Christianity is the most highly evolved, inclusive religion. In many ways, therefore, he might be seen as anticipating post-Darwinian Christian apologists, weaving history's religions into a comprehensive narrative of divine accommodation as it prepares the nations for the crowning revelation of Christ.⁸

Certainly, it is the logical Concept that guides Hegel as an Ariadne's thread through the labyrinth of religion and religions. At the heart of the seemingly unintelligible chaos of divine images and ritual practices is nothing merely empirical or psychological, as proposed by many of the 'enlightened': not gratitude for past benefactions (e.g. Prodicus, Euhemerus), nor awe at the heavens or mysterious dreams (Democritus), nor ignorance and fear manipulated by priests and law-makers (Critias, Lucretius). Quasi-rational reverence for moral postulates (Kant) is not at the core of religion, nor is the 'feeling of absolute dependence' (Schleiermacher). Nor can religion depend on irruptions of energy from a transcendent beyond, for ostensible revelations become objects of thought, which the mind inevitably relates to others. Thus Spirit integrates all seemingly transcendent 'others'. Religion becomes (with art and philosophy) another mode of *absolute* self-mediation. In applying this thesis to religious antiquity, Hegel is able to make many substantial insights regarding Greek and Roman religions, even while he misses many details.⁹ In the end his somewhat idiosyncratic Christology may overemphasize the identity of human worshippers and their divine 'other': an error that draws much inspiration from his

⁷ Stark 2007: 5–8 (following Benin 1993) summarizes the principle of divine accommodation as 'a truly remarkable key' for religious history.

⁸ For example, J.F. Clarke views 'ethnic' religions (i.e. religions 'of the nations', *ethnē* or *gentes*) as 'partial' while Christianity is 'universal', 'progressive', and therefore 'Catholic, or adapted to become the Religion of all Races' (e.g. 1871: 1.6–8); while Ellinwood argues for 'the need of understanding the false religions' as the foil to Christianity (1891).

⁹ Very few works are dedicated to Hegel's treatment of Greek and Roman religions: Leuze 1975 is valuable, especially on Hegel's contemporary sources; Jaeschke 1984, and Labuschagne and Slootweg 2012 focus mainly on Hegel's analysis, as does J. Stewart's admirably clear 'logic of the gods' (2018), which appeared while this book was already in press. At least one specialist, Latte, has praised Hegel's analysis of Roman religion (1967: 47).

understanding of Greek and Roman religions. In exploring Hegel's ancient religions, I will paint a composite picture, drawing from all the lectures on religion, as well as *LA*, *LH*, and *PS*, but most of all upon the 1824 lectures.¹⁰

4.2. Greek Religion

Hegel's logic demands that God, as the essence of reality, *must* reveal itself in finite appearances, and so historical religions have detected the divine in everything from light to rivers to animals to logical arguments. But of all finite entities, human beings in their rational self-consciousness are the highest,¹¹ and hence the human form becomes the locus of divine self-revelation, as well as of artistic beauty. The notion of Incarnation therefore becomes 'the true Idea of religion', against which all religions are to be measured. Siberian shamans, Buddhist lamas, Hindu avatars, Syrian Adonis, Egyptian Osiris, even Roman emperors: in all of these is the anthropomorphic principle partially evident. The historical series ends with Christ: Christianity alone recognizes the Incarnation in all its profundity, explicitly representing the true content of religion under a form (i.e. Jesus Christ) perfectly adequate to it. Or, in Hegel's logical terms, only in Christianity does a once-transcendent *Logos* enter into the seeming unreason of history and transform it, as its central turning point.¹²

In the long evolution towards Christianity's 'religion of truth', no finite religion does so much to advance the anthropomorphic principle of Incarnation as the Greek. The Greeks first fully envisioned the divine *per se* as human in form. With a certain ignorance of Sumerian, Hittite, Ugaritic, and other Near Eastern precedents,¹³ Hegel takes the 'circle' of Olympian gods as *the* anthropomorphic particularization of his divine Concept. As a distinct personality, with semi-profane purposes that it pursues with

¹⁰ The 1821 manuscript (Ms) contains the most on Roman religion, the 1824 lectures fairly definitively articulate Hegel's views on determinate religions (Hodgson 2006: 40, 1987a: II.56–7), the 1827 version is often most concise and vividly illustrated, while the incomplete 1831 notes have the ostensible advantage of being Hegel's last word on the subject. The discussion of the Roman world in *LH* is particularly valuable. My references to *LR* will be to the 1824 lectures, unless otherwise indicated.

¹¹ E.g. *LH* 249.

¹² The Hegelian dialectic would thus justify as rational traditional dating (*anno Domini*); on which cf. Tibebu 2011: 154–5.

¹³ Burkert: 'Egypt apart, the Near Eastern-Aegean *koine* quite evidently involves a pantheon of anthropomorphic gods who speak and interact with one another in a human way' (1985: 182; cf. 119).

carefree gaiety, untouched by the real sufferings of nature, each of the beautiful Greek gods *is* God, in the mode accommodated to their aesthetic worshippers.¹⁴

The group of Greek gods is a plurality of individuals in which each single god, even if endowed with the specific character of a particular person, is still a comprehensive totality, containing also in itself the attribute of another god. For every shape, as Divine, is always also the whole. For this reason alone do the Greek individual gods have a wealth of characteristics, and although their blessedness consists in their universal and spiritual self-repose and in their abstraction from the direct bent towards finitude and towards the dispersive manifold of things and relations, still they have all the same the power to evince themselves as active and effective in various ways. They are neither the abstract particular nor the abstract universal, but the universal which is the source of the particular.¹⁵

This passage is rich with associations: it echoes the contemporary consensus (shared by Winckelmann, Herder, Goethe, Schiller, Schopenhauer, et al.) that the Greek gods were archetypes (*Gestalten*); it is Leibnizian in positing each divine personality as a 'totality' that mirrors the divine whole and its parts (e.g. other gods) from one perspective; it has roots in Neoplatonic derivations of visible gods from higher divine principles of *Nous*, and reflects Hegel's analogous sense that 'Greek religion contains a degree of reason'.¹⁶ Most obviously, it places mythology at the heart of Greek religion: the Greek idea of gods as beautiful, archetypal personalities can be inferred from their pantheon, and around it revolve the many facets of cult and ritual—temples, statues, festivals, sacrifices, oracles, even the Mysteries. This leading concept of god as concrete personality is also the handle by which Hegel would relate

¹⁴ With his dictum 'Die Götter sind da', Wilamowitz reminded readers that the Greeks worshipped their gods as real, objective beings: a fact Hegel stresses with his formula of the Greek 'sculptural spirit' and his leading concept of the Greek gods as 'individualities, objectively beautiful' (LH 244). Study of Homeric religion has regained this sympathetic imagination only comparatively recently. Against the twentieth-century consensus that Homeric religion 'was not really a religion at all' (Murray), Griffin argues that 'the gods of Homer must be faced as gods' (1983: 145); cf. Dodds 1951: 19–20, Griffin 1978: 20, Burkert 1985: 122, Turkeltaub 2007.

¹⁵ LA 1.487; cf. 1.223–4.

¹⁶ Greek gods exhaust the Idea of God and/or humanity: e.g. Goethe, *Roman Elegy* 11, with Trevelyan 1941: 169–78, Schopenhauer, *World as Will and Representation* III.34. Neoplatonic: e.g. Plotinus 5.8.9: 14–17 (*Nous* bears 'all the gods within him, he who is one and all, and each god is all the gods coming together into one', tr. Armstrong). 'Degree of reason': LH 330.

Greek religion to its 'abstract' Oriental predecessors and its ever more 'concrete' Roman and Christian successors.

Hegel's Orientals conceived the divine in substantial, naturalistic terms—a conception that evolved ultimately into the Egyptians' theriomorphic gods. More specifically, Oriental representations of the divine swing wildly between two poles of indeterminacy: from the fantastically sensual to the barrenly abstract, from the 33 million deities of Hinduism to the transcendent Brahman, Chinese Tian, Buddhist Nothing, Zoroastrian Light, or Hebrew Lord. The Egyptians' firmer grasp of subjective spirituality produced myths of the dying-and-rising Osiris, and so too in their strange jackal- or ibis-headed deities Hegel intuitively senses Spirit struggling to burst its natural cocoon and escape animals' inarticulate silence. Egypt thus becomes the land of 'ferment', of 'marvels' and 'enigma': driven by sources deeper than their comprehension, its kings and people toil fervently on their Pyramids, temple-complexes, and monumental statues, and engrave their wisdom in enigmatic hieroglyphs. Yet all this artistic symbolism could not quite accommodate the divine Concept stirring within.¹⁷ The Sphinx poses her riddle to the sands, and the goddess Neith in Sais responds that 'no mortal has yet lifted my veil'. But a mortal would in fact lift the veil on Egyptian mysteries. Oedipus solved the Sphinx's riddle with the answer 'Man'. As a follower of Delphic Apollo, this Hegelian Oedipus lifts the veil on the Greek—and human—adventure of self-discovery.¹⁸

This awakening would be accomplished by Greece's artists: above all by Hesiod, Homer, and the sculptors. Herodotus 2.53 (long the standard epigraph in histories of Greek religion) becomes a key text for Hegel too, quoted repeatedly as a profound insight: the Homeric and Hesiodic poems really *did* shape the Greeks' conception of divinity, and hence the Greeks' self-consciousness as a whole.¹⁹ Of the great epic poems, Hesiod's *Theogony* is the most obvious source and corroboration of the logico-historical

¹⁷ Land of marvels, enigma: e.g. *LH* 199–200, 212–13. On the Egyptian 'transition from substantiality to subjectivity', cf. *PS* §691–8, Hodgson 1987a: II.41–4, 65–8.

¹⁸ Veil: *LR* 2.639 n.345 (1827); *LH* 220–1. Schiller and Novalis made Neith's veil a celebrated image. Hegel also draws on Creuzer to make mythic figures like Prometheus, Cecrops, Cadmus, Danaus, and Pelops vehicles of cultural diffusion from the Orient (*LH* 226–8).

¹⁹ Among the many who quote or rework Herodotus 2.53 ('it was Homer and Hesiod who created for the Greeks a genealogy of the gods') are Herder (see Guthrie 1950: 2–4); Dodds (1951: 14–15); and Burkert (1985: 119–25). Burkert also warns against the older view that, ignoring Near Eastern precedents, regarded 'the world of the Olympian gods as something quite unique, as a creation of Homer, that is, of the early Greeks and their poets' (182). Hegel for his part only partially escapes this fault, by reworking Herodotus to posit twin sources for Greek religion: diffusion from Egypt, and the native evolution of Greek art (*LH* 237).

transition that Hegel traces from Egypt's animal gods to the beautiful human gods of Greece. The *Theogony* sings of the gods' births, struggles, and achieved perfection: first Chaos, then Earth and all her brood—then Uranus overthrown by Cronus, and the Titans by the Olympians. In these successive celestial revolutions Hegel finds the clearest allegory of how primeval nature gods yielded to or evolved into ethical, human deities. Cronus, for example, gives way to Zeus, god of the sky but also of justice, friendship, and hospitality; Oceanus gives way to Poseidon, god of the sea, but also fortifications and the horse; Helios as god of light yields to Apollo, who presides also over purity, medicine, music, and dance; the Naiads are displaced by the Muses, goddesses of fountains *and* music. Indeed, Hesiod's *Theogony* suggests to Hegel that *all* the 'universal powers' of the natural and ethical realms go into the making of the more spiritual Olympians. For the 'universal powers' and 'essentialities, that are the true, substantive [frame] in which all else subsists'—for instance 'heaven and earth, rivers, mountains, day and night, the divisions of time, and also the ethical realm: justice, giving of oaths, family, marriage, bravery, science, art, agriculture, civic and political life'—develop into so many separate, powerful divine *subjects*, who represent 'absolute' unions of the natural and ethical.²⁰ For Hegel, then, the picture-language of Hesiod's myths runs very deep, expressing the logical truth that Nature grounds and is subsumed into the more articulated reality of Spirit. If the Titanomachy is so profound, Hegel does not shirk from allegorizing its finer details: the fact that the primeval gods are both 'relegated to the verge of the world' and yet 'continue to be venerated' illustrates the *Aufhebung* as it both negates and purifies; Cronus ('abstract time') and the Titanic 'powers of Nature' are hidden in Tartarus, and their 'unlimited power of reproduction is restrained'; Prometheus is bound, and his merely utilitarian arts made subordinate to the Olympian spirit; the Olympians themselves retain epithets like 'ox-eyed' and 'owl-eyed', have animal familiars and even undergo animal metamorphoses, yet these are now only vestigial—and all but submerged in the higher vision of Hesiod and Homer.²¹

By interpreting the Greek Olympians as poetic products of the evolution of 'substance to subjectivity', of the 'elevation of nature to spirit', and the

²⁰ Substantive frame: LR 2.479. List of examples: 2.461.

²¹ Punishment, veneration, vestigial presence: LH 245, LA 1.469–75; cf. LR 2.466 (Prometheus' utilitarian art). Titanic nature versus spiritual Olympians: LH 245, LA 1.458–68. Metamorphoses (mainly Ovidian, signifying punishment, degradation): LA 1.447–52.

'transition from the Oriental to the Occidental spirit', Hegel joins the legions who allegorized them, from a 'scientific' Max Müller back to the Classical Sophists. Yet, for Hegel, *his* philosophical allegory is available only to philosophical modernity, and not to the Greeks themselves. His Greeks did not conceptualize their religion, which as a *Kunstreligion* ever remained a product and object of the 'poetic', i.e. the aesthetic imagination. This Hegel closely associates with the Greek mythopoetic imagination, as it transfigures phenomena into many-sided divine personalities. In natural phenomena that seem discrete and prosaic to the prosaic mind, the deeper poetic mind intuitively a universal essence, which it communicates to others in the language of sense, and often in anthropomorphic form: the still pond becomes home of shy Naiads, the musical stream is transformed into the Muses' Hippocrene, and the sea-storm into Poseidon's wrath. In such creations of mythopoetic 'phantasy', the aesthetic imagination hovers between sense and understanding, literal description and allegory—and therefore gives rise to Greek-style gods, intermediate between Oriental abstractions and the concretely personal (e.g. Christ).²²

In a word, these Olympian personalities are 'sculptural', and their intermediate status makes sculpture the medium most appropriate for their manifestation.²³ But, for Hegel, an artist does not transfer ready-made images into a material vessel. No mere mechanical craftsman, the artist feels his way (as it were) towards the final product, imaginatively. Thus, Herodotus' statement is extended from epic to sculpture, as Hegel contends that Greek sculptors discovered their religious *material* in the process of giving it aesthetic *form*. Symbolic wooden *xoana* gave way with time to Pheidias bronze, and so the sculptors also gave the Greeks their 'plastic' gods, now literally 'formed by human hands'.²⁴ He repeats the phrase when evaluating the nature and truth of Greek religion as a whole: 'God is something made by human beings. Poets, sculptors, and painters taught

²² Spiritualizing activity of *Phantasie*: LR 2.654–7 (1827); cf. LH 234–7 on *manteia*, or 'poesy' (236).

²³ A similar complex of themes informs Burkert's discussion of the Greek gods' quasi-sculptural *personality*: 'the Greek gods are persons, not abstractions, ideas or concepts' and the 'plastic' verisimilitude of personality (which is neither immediate phenomenon nor abstract concept) is their 'defining characteristic', not shared by the more allegorical, Near Eastern deities (1985: 182–3; cf. 184–5). Hence, the Greek 'man faces the gods coolly as a well-moulded individual, just like his statues of the gods', for like statues, the gods 'stand at a distance, well-moulded figures, to be viewed from various angles' (1985: 189). Bremmer references this discussion to contrast Burkert's divine 'persons' with Vernant's 'powers' (1994: 22–3), not acknowledging how the 'sculptural' spans the opposition with a rich ambiguity.

²⁴ LR 2.657 (1827, referencing Herodotus 2.53).

the Greeks what their gods were; they beheld their god in the Zeus of Pheidias'.²⁵ This rich sentence draws upon Herodotus and Plotinus, to place St Paul's hallowed phrase within a larger trajectory of religious evolution: God (in Hegel's vision) needs human *poēsis* (in all its variety) for His own self-actualization, and the sculpted Greek gods *were* God as He accommodated Himself to the Greek world and its 'sculptural' imagination.²⁶ At the same time, the sentence implicitly contrasts the Greek gods who are 'beheld' through the *mediation* of art, with the *immediacy* of Oriental deities, which are directly present to sense or abstract thought.²⁷

A further consequence of this artistic mediation is the Greeks' self-identification with their gods. These are not given by external revelation, not intuited by a founding sage, or constrained by a single holy place, authoritative book, or priestly class. As inspired artists moulded the gods into beautiful exemplars in whose image the people moulded themselves, Greek anthropomorphism achieved an unprecedented unity of divine and human. Moreover, as beautiful the gods are admired and emulated as blessed beings, rather than feared as the sublime sky gods, Lords, and Allahs of the Orient. Bondage to an unfathomable master is replaced by a new sense of freedom *in* the similar divine other.²⁸ Such gods cannot be honoured with cults of death or the mechanical strictures of Roman *religio*.²⁹ Rather, the *cultus* that unites the Greeks with their gods must reflect their pluralism and carefree freedom, and indeed it is the Greek cult that first allows humans to associate with the divine in an atmosphere of free enjoyment and near equality. The aesthetic rituals of festivals, games, processions, hymns, choruses, and dramas are enjoyed by gods and humans alike, and in their aesthetic totality, they perfuse the worshippers' being, dissolving any strong sense of separation from the divine. In the temples, humans wander freely through divine spaces; in prayer, they stand upright as equals rather than kneel down as subordinates; in sacrificial feasts, they partake of the divine essence in 'bread and wine', a veritable forerunner of the Eucharist; in

²⁵ LR 2.659 n.412 (1827); cf. LA 1.504–5.

²⁶ Plotinus: 5.8.1 (Pheidias' Zeus). St Paul: Acts 19:26 ('they are no gods who are made with hands'); cf. 7:48, 17:24 and Talbert 2005: 171–2.

²⁷ Cf. Burkert: 'Homeric gods are not demonstrable in this way [as the Zoroastrians' Sky]; the poems are created by poets, the statues are wrought by artists. How can one seriously speak about them as simply being the case?' (1985: 306).

²⁸ So free is the Greek cult from slavishness that Hegel hesitates to call it *Gottesdienst* (LR 2.485). Burkert too contrasts the Greek god–man relation with Near Eastern ones—'rarely is the [Greek] god invoked with the title Lord, *despota*'—but finds in this freedom a greater emotional distance, and little love (1985: 189).

²⁹ See LH 290–2 for passing contrasts with Roman *religio*.

festivals, they attend freely rather than out of duty; in the athletic, choral, and dramatic competitions, competitors manifest the gods' universal powers in shows of speed, strength, eloquence, and beauty, and so 'make the divine present in themselves'; and in the *polis* as a whole, the sacred landscape, denizens, and way of life are consecrated to some tutelary deities who habitually enjoy their cult *there*, like Athena in Athens.³⁰ There is a double motion here, as the gods descend into their cults as palpable presences, while in the elevation of prayer, worshippers become 'conscious of the indwelling of the divine'.³¹ Objective presence and subjective awareness are united in the single reality of the divine—Spirit. Thus, the sensuous splendour and joy of Greek festivals are far from superficial, in Hegel's eyes, and he in fact rationalizes them as religiously profound. His Greeks are the first to be 'immediately at home' with their gods.³² At one with their gods as their own higher natures, they achieve through their *cultus* an aesthetic form of infinite self-mediation.

Hegel's notion of Greek ritual thus extends beyond sacrifice to the Games, festivals, and other customs of the Greeks' beautiful way of life. The Mysteries, oracles, and oracular dreams are likewise construed as further forms uniting human and divine. In these more indeterminate experiences, Hegel's Greeks felt the active and immediate self-revelation of the divine: the Mysteries imparted feelings of the universal life-force, the oracles an echo of the gods' self-certainty, otherwise denied to the anxious human suppliant. And yet precisely because the Mysteries and oracles were old, for Hegel they must have been fairly vacuous. The rustling leaves and clanging bronze at Dodona, the whistling wind and babbling Pythia at Delphi, the random visions beheld in Trophonius' cave, or the random words imparted by the Achaean Hermes—all these are even more indeterminate than the famous reply to Croesus, and must be actively interpreted by their human recipients. Vague universals, they require human thought to become relevant to a particular situation. So the oracles point to their own decline and fulfilment in the 'inner infinite certainty'³³ achieved by the thinking subject:

³⁰ Sacrifice as proto-Eucharistic: *LR* 2.483–4 ('They ate and drank bread and wine as Ceres and Bacchus... In this way the gods offer themselves up, and the *cultus* consists in the enjoyment of assimilating them while at the same time recognizing their power'); cf. *PS* §§109 and especially 718, 722–4; Farnell makes similar comments (1958: 15–16). The divine sacrifice of *itself* for humanity is, of course, the dominant theme of Christianity—but hardly of Greek polytheistic ritual. 'Make the divine present': *LR* 2.485. Athena, Athens: 'Athena is the city and also the goddess. The deity is the spirit of the people, not their guardian-spirit or suchlike, but their living, actual, present spirit' (2.479); cf. *PR* §257R, *LH* 272.

³¹ *LR* 2.478.

³² *LR* 2.479–80.

³³ Oracles: *LR* 2.486–8.

Apollo is replaced by Socrates' *daimōn*, the Stoic 'god within', and ultimately Christian conscience.

Many other moments present Greek religion as slowly giving way to the more internal religiosity characteristic of Greek philosophy and Christianity. In the philosophical realm, Sophistic, Socratic, and even Aristophanic scepticism about *nomoi* shift the locus of sanctity from substantial customs to self-aware subjects, from an aesthetic *Sittlichkeit* to an inner purity.³⁴ Hence, physical means of overcoming alienation from the divine (e.g. ritual purification of *miasma*) yield to the 'purifying' power of philosophical reason;³⁵ before the Platonic dictum that 'God is not jealous', the old departmental gods give way to a new, overflowing Good.³⁶ This quasi-Hegelian Idea gradually developed (via intermediaries like the Aristotelian God and Plotinian *Nous*) into the Christian Trinity, which replaced the polytheistic pantheon with a more perfectly articulated God, and would remain 'for two thousand years... the holiest Christian idea'.³⁷ Specifically Christian notes enter into Hegel's remarks that archaic Fate (which vaguely unites the pantheon of gods and before which heroes bow in 'resigned sorrow') prefigures Christian Providence; into his interrogation of the death of Sophocles' Oedipus, whether he experiences a certain grace at Colonus; into his hesitation about Heracles' apotheosis, whether it signifies a merely natural *happiness* or the spiritual serenity of Christian *bliss*; into parallels between sacrifices in Greek tragedy and the sacrifice of Christ, between tragic suffering that brings resolution and the Christian Passion that precedes Resurrection—all such moments juxtapose Greek and Christian as propaedeutic and 'truth', respectively.

The two strands come together in Hegel's revision of the age-old critique of Greek anthropomorphism. 'Thracian gods are red-haired and blue-eyed, and if lions could paint gods, they would paint them as lions': Xenophanes' statements anticipate Feuerbach's argument that God is a projection of ideal

³⁴ For Burkert too, the more individualistic, critical, prose-reading culture of 'philosophical religion' is fairly 'incommensurable' with the older, communitarian *nomoi* (1985: 305, cf. 311–12).

³⁵ Resignation before Fate: LR 2.482; cf. LA 1.503–4, 2.1216 contrasting archaic blind Fate with a more personal, even 'self-conscious' Providence. Purification by blood-sacrifice versus 'inward cleansing': LR 2.489–97.

³⁶ LP 2.72–3 contrasts Plato's 'great, beautiful, true, and childlike thought' with *Nemesis*, *Dikē*, Fate, and praises it as 'much higher' than the conceptions of 'most moderns' who effectively 'ascribe jealousy to God' by making Him unknowable. In *SL*, *Nemesis* prefigures the logical category of measure, illustrating the notion of God as measure of all things (284–5); cf. Stace 1955: §236.

³⁷ LP 1.222.

human qualities, and that therefore each society reflects itself in its gods. Hegel more than anticipates Feuerbach when he turns Xenophanes' original critique on its head: the Greek gods are deficient, not because they were anthropomorphic, but because 'they were not anthropomorphic *enough*'.³⁸ Hegel's God (as we have seen) must appear in human form, and so it is precisely their anthropomorphism that makes the Greek deities truer than Oriental abstractions and Egyptian animal-gods. But to show the limits of this Greek religious 'truth', Hegel actually asks the question, 'Why did God not appear to the Greeks in the flesh?' Scripture's answer—'because His hour had not yet come'—is paraphrased by Hegel in more humanistic terms:

Because man was not duly estimated, did not obtain honour and dignity, till he had more fully elaborated and developed himself in the attainment of the freedom implicit in the aesthetic manifestation in question.³⁹

In other words, God was not made flesh among the Greeks because the Greeks themselves did not recognize the *fully* finite, human subject as the inevitable vessel of infinite spirit. As somewhat abstract idealizations, the Greek gods are not fully real; as mythological personalities they are not actual living persons; and as the products of artistic making, they exist 'perennially in the manifestation—only in marble, in metal or wood, or as figured by the imagination'.⁴⁰ Beautifully ideal, deathless, made and remade by poets and a thousand sculptural hands, they cannot fully enter into the singularities of nature and history so as to have *these* parents, *this* birth, *this* life, *this* crown of thorns, *this* death. The Incarnation inherits and makes obsolete the Greek aesthetic epiphanies, and the 'death of God' that is so central to Christian imagery signifies really the death of the old, finite, pagan gods: in the history of Jesus' Crucifixion, it is God as a particular, natural being that dies—to be reborn as Spirit; in religious world-history, the

³⁸ LP 3.4 (italics added); cf. LA 1.435 ('classical art is anthropomorphic enough for art, but not enough for higher religion'), 1.505–6, LH 248–9, 323–4 ('Greek anthropomorphism... did not go far enough'). Xenophanes overturned: LA 1.435, LR 2.661 (1827).

³⁹ LH 249; cf. LA 1.503–11. 'His hour had not come': see LR 2.699 n.544 for allusions to the 'fullness of time' (as in Mark 1:15, Galatians 4:4, Ephesians 1:10)—in the context of Roman religion.

⁴⁰ LH 249 (the 'real defect' of Greek religion); cf. LA 1.505, LR 2.501 (gods as 'essential powers' are 'not tied to a singular existence').

Greeks' aesthetic idols must be both made and broken—to be integrated into the deeper idealism of philosophical thought and Christian imagery.⁴¹

Hegel's juxtaposition of the Greek gods and Christ may seem unusual, even idiosyncratic.⁴² This would certainly not have been so in the first Christian centuries, which saw many partial comparisons of Christ with Pan and Hermes (shepherds), Asclepius (healer), Dionysus (saving god of wine, born of the high god and a mortal woman), as well as with 'divine men' like Heracles (suffering, dying-and-rising saviour), Orpheus (conqueror of death), Odysseus (tied to the Cross-like mast), and others. Something of that fluid variety of divine images returns in Hegel's time—at least among those 'Greek souls' who wavered between their Christian upbringings and pagan yearnings. Such aesthetic pagans felt little of early Christians' fears of the heathen gods as malignant demons, and revered the Greek deities rather as archetypes of human beauty and power. As veritable high priest of this cult, Winckelmann's essays on the Belvedere statues gained almost scriptural status, sacred texts of initiation into higher Beauty—and the gods embodying it. Inspired by Winckelmann, Schiller's 'Gods of Greece' (1788) would itself inspire many later generations: *then* 'beautiful gods' walked the earth, but by *now* they have fled, exiled by Christianity and modern science. But though the modern world is disenchanted and emptied of its beauty, poetry (Schiller hints) may allow the old gods to live once more, and his later, more systematic thinking on aesthetic education positively demands an art to represent the Olympians as he conceives them: exemplary human beings integrating sensual and intellectual in a complete, harmonious existence.⁴³ 'Das Ideal und Das Leben' is the most important of such poems, calling the reader to emulate Hercules, as the one who struggled through the quasi-Kantian limitations of mortal 'life' and so gained the effortless serenity of the Olympian 'ideal'.

Similar ancient sources, a similar admiration of Winckelmann, and a similar post-Kantian framework (Nature, art, higher archetypes, Ideas) inform the 'paganism' of Karl Philip Moritz, Goethe, and Hölderlin. Moritz's *Götterlehre* (1791) argues that the essence of the Greek gods is

⁴¹ See e.g. LA 2.861 (paintings of the Nativity, often set off against a crumbling temple, thus hinting at 'the destruction of heathenism by the Christian church'). Death of God: see e.g. R. Williams 2012, Jonkers 2012: 187–92; cf. Squire 2011: 154–201 ('On gods made men made images').

⁴² Perhaps most striking is the comparison of Jesus on the Mount with Hermes *psychopompus* (LR 3.117 (Ms)).

⁴³ The Olympians thus symbolize 'one of Schiller's most persistent themes' (Pugh 2005: 53).

power: some *one* elemental power is represented by each deity; these powers are in conflict (conflict being a perennial fact of existence), but in the Olympian victory over the Titans, form and determinate power triumph over the forces of chaos; human beings are insignificant latecomers to this edifying conflict; yet as heroic children of the Olympians they partake of the divine essence and so identify with them; the order of divine-natural power is thus not other to humanity, and it is indeed through human beings that this order becomes self-conscious, particularly in the Greeks' mythico-artistic productions.⁴⁴ Moritz developed his interpretation in conversation with Goethe in Rome, and Goethe's ideas probably entered into Moritz's eventual publication. Moritz's influence in turn helped to consolidate Goethe's 'conversion', for by the time he left Rome for Naples, Goethe 'went a pagan, with eyes open to see the world as it is, in its beauty and its terror'.⁴⁵ With Hölderlin, finally, love of the Greek gods cohabits more complexly with love of Christ. Like Schiller, he can find in Hercules a Christ-like saviour, whose return will herald the return of the divine age ('Chiron', 1801). More explicit is the statement that Hercules and Dionysus are 'brothers' of Christ, who becomes in effect the last of the Greek gods. But He is for Hölderlin in the end 'the unique one', *Der Einzige*, and if he serves Him, he must renounce the others. Hence in poems like 'Germanien', he sadly gives up singing the *Götterbilder* of Greece.⁴⁶

The death of the gods—and their possible resurrection in art, Christianity, or a higher philosophy of art—haunted Hegel as much as it did contemporary philhellènes. This is reflected in his youthful poem 'Eleusis', with its echoes of Schiller's 'Gods of Greece'.⁴⁷ It returns also in moments of the Berlin lectures that interrogate the true meaning of Hercules' apotheosis. In *LR*, Hegel notes the prophecy that Hercules would replace Zeus, and concludes that by his Labours Hercules transformed the natural within himself and became 'purely spiritual individuality'—and therefore superior to the

⁴⁴ Trevelyan's summary of *Götterlehre* (1941: 145–8) stresses its quasi-Winckelmannian 'defence of anthropomorphism in religion. Nature created mankind in order that she might be conscious of herself. In return mankind has learnt how to re-express Nature in his own form' (146). Moritz's emphasis on power as the 'implacable essence of life' (147) may well be historically insightful, if it is true that the Olympians are 'the Stronger Ones' (Burkert 1985: 205) or if, more specifically, at 'the centre of Pindar's religion is his vision of gods as, first and foremost, embodiments of power' (Bowra 1964: 43–4).

⁴⁵ Trevelyan 1941: 148.

⁴⁶ 'Der Einzige', ll. 43–7. Brothers: ll. 50–3. 'Germanien': ll. 1–2. See W.D. Desmond forthcoming for more on 'Hercules among the Germans'.

⁴⁷ For Hegel's admiration of Schiller, see Kelly 1978: 55–89, Forster 1998: 22–8.

other gods.⁴⁸ In *LA*, on the other hand, Hercules' apotheosis becomes a reward *external* to his Labours: he gains the happiness of repose, not the serenity of a bliss won in and beyond suffering. Therefore,

the ancient prophecy that he would put an end to the reign of Zeus, he did not fulfil, supreme hero of the Greeks though he was. The end of that rule only began when man conquered not dragons outside him or Lernaean hydras, but the dragons and hydras of his own heart, the inner obstinacy and inflexibility of his own self. Only in this way does natural serenity (*natürliche Heiterkeit*) become that higher serenity of the spirit which completely traverses the negative moment of disunion and by this labour has won infinite satisfaction. (*LA* 2.816)

Here, Hercules' victories over 'hydras' are mythopoetic anticipations of the more properly spiritual victories of Christ and of philosophical reflection, by which death itself dies and negativity negates itself. *These* are the post-classical victories enabling the bliss that is the inner 'truth' of Olympian cheerfulness.⁴⁹ Thus, although he shares his 'pagan' contemporaries' ancient sources, admiration of Winckelmann, post-Kantian categories, and even empathetic reverence for Greek *Kunstreligion*, Hegel ultimately rejects any yearnings for a pagan revival. In his broader historical framework, it was not just Christianity (and modern disenchantment) that made living hard for the Olympians. There were also centuries of Roman rule, and practically speaking it was the crushing pragmatism of the Roman imperial pantheon that put an end to the reign of Zeus.

4.3. Roman Religion

Renaissance art and such classics as Ovid's *Metamorphoses* ensure that many still essentially equate the Greek and Roman gods. While Hegel will posit their deeper continuity, he is also among the first to sharply

⁴⁸ *LR* 2.467–68 (alluding perhaps to Aeschylus *Prometheus Vincitus* 755–68, Aristophanes *Birds* 1641–5).

⁴⁹ Kantian definitions inform this passage's allegories: *happiness* (*Glück, Glückseligkeit*) is the external agreement of will and circumstances (1991b: A806/B834); higher *bliss* or *beatitude* (*Seligkeit*) belongs to 'a perfect well-being independent of all contingent causes in the world' (2015: 100n), a state that Kant associates with God, Hegel with Christian enlightenment more generally. The distinction traces back to Aquinas's *eudaimonia* and *beatitudo* and even to Aristotle's *eudaimonia* and *makariotēs* (Caygill 1995: 221).

differentiate Greek *mythology* from Roman *religion*: vivid Olympian personalities versus hidden *numina*; cheerful spontaneity versus practical *religio*; imaginative creations compelling to reason (*Vernunft*) versus the rule-bound cult of a utilitarian understanding (*Verstand*)—in brief, ‘poetry’ versus ‘prose’.⁵⁰ Here, reversing Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ evaluations, Hegel can prefer the frivolity and even violence of the Greek gods as reflecting the truth of divine freedom, while the Romans’ pragmatic religion ever smacks of superstition and magic and was therefore a ready object of satire in antiquity.⁵¹ At the same time, the Roman world does bring an advance in religious understanding. The one God that manifests itself in the humanized gods of Greece is even more finely particularized in the humanly useful gods of Rome.⁵² The same fundamental divine energy that shone through its beautiful Greek incarnations will, via Roman practicality, make all nature its vessel for spiritual self-realization. In this sense, Greek religion is subsumed as a moment within the Roman, and this, as the last of the ‘finite’ religions, will draw into its pantheon ‘all’ previous pantheons and so prepare for a deeper intuition of God’s universality. The Roman religion of endless finite purposes will find its truly ‘infinite’ satisfaction in Christianity, product and ‘truth’ of the *Roman* world: the centuries of war, imperial expansion, labour, and alienation that constitute Roman history become the true ‘preparation for the Gospel’.

The leading idea behind this startling synthesis is that of ‘finite purposiveness’. The term and idea came to prominence in Kant’s critique of the teleological argument for God’s existence—the argument from design that Kant regards as ‘the oldest, clearest and most appropriate to human reason’, grounded as it is in an *a priori* category of judgment: purposiveness (*Zweckmässigkeit*). This is defined as ‘conformity to an end or purpose’, or as ‘causality according to concepts’, such that a ‘purposive’ entity is intelligible only as the product of its concept or purpose (*Zweck*).⁵³ For Hegel, purposes have both a subjective and objective dimension, and the many

⁵⁰ Popular conflation of Greek and Roman religion, but their essential difference (free beauty versus finite purpose, poetical and ‘theoretical’ versus practical gods, natural and ethical essences versus immediate needs): *LR* 2.207–8 (Ms); cf. *LR* 2.501.

⁵¹ Dionysius’s *Roman Antiquities*: *LR* 2.501–2. Roman purposiveness, superstition, magic: *LR* 2.220 (Ms); cf. *LP* 2.409–10, *LH* 294. Romans’ not a religion in the true sense: *LR* 2.291; cf. 2.508–9.

⁵² This dynamic may contextualize the remark, ‘the more civilized the Greeks became, the more gods they had’ (*LA* 1.236–7).

⁵³ Teleological argument ‘oldest’: Kant 1991b: A623/B651. *Zweckmässigkeit*: Kant 1994a: §63, 65.

separate purposes of human subjects converge ultimately upon the highest, all-embracing *Zweck* of the 'absolute objectivity of self-consciousness'. Purpose becomes 'the self-sustaining unity of the Concept', which in turn determines itself as finite, external purposes 'in opposition to reality'.⁵⁴ Such high speculations have a direct bearing on the Roman world, for in Hegel's historical thinking, purposiveness is not only a perennial category of mind itself, but a feature especially characteristic of the *Roman* mind.⁵⁵ More concretely, Hegel's Romans fasten on their own immediate, finite purposes, each of which they treat as ultimate and out of which they produce various gods to satisfy them. Each Roman deity thus becomes *zweckmässig*, at once 'purposive' and 'expedient', because it can only be explained as grounded in its worshippers' conceptually transparent purposes: the god *Pax*, for example, arose from the need of particular worshippers for 'peace'. Human purposes are thus the source of the Roman pantheon, and the clear-cut means-ends thinking that underlies Roman religion makes it a 'religion of the understanding', a 'religion of utility'.⁵⁶ Less obviously, it is a religion of self-consciousness, for in their purposive gods the Romans in fact contemplate and venerate their own will. This subjective origin was of course not apparent to the Romans themselves, who looked on their gods as external *others*, and were not able to recognize the deeper teleology behind their rather obvious personifications.

While Kantian *Zweckmässigkeit* provided the basic idea by which Hegel construed Roman religion, it was on Karl Philipp Moritz's *Anthousa; oder, Roms Alterthümer* (1791) that he relied for historical details. But where

⁵⁴ See LR 2.194–7.

⁵⁵ Teleological argument associated with the Roman mind and Roman religion: e.g. LR 2.195–6 (Ms). The main schema historicizes the various proofs of God's existence: Oriental and Greek, Roman, and Christian religions are reflected in the cosmological, teleological, and ontological arguments respectively. In this ordered sequence, the first two proofs attempt (imperfectly) to demonstrate the infinite from the finite, while only the ontological argument deduces from the concept of the infinite its actual existence, and so shows 'the genuine agreement between Concept and reality' (EL §60; cf. LR 3.352): echoing, perhaps, the Nicene Creed—infinite from infinite, 'true God from true God'. Sedley 2007 provides a history of the teleological argument in antiquity, first clearly articulated in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* 1.4.5–6 (cf. LR 2.198–9, 2.703 (1831)); during Hegel's lifetime it found its most up-to-date, mechanistic variation in William Paley's *Natural Theology* (1802). As for the argument from the *consensus gentium*, Hegel notes Cicero's 'copious use' of it, but regards it as outmoded and superficial (LP 1.93). Furthermore, Goethe's division of religions into ethnic, philosophical, and Christian (in *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre*) 'may help to explain' why for Hegel Roman religion mediates between 'ethnic' religions and Christianity (Hodgson 1987a: II.97–8 n.13).

⁵⁶ 'Religion of utility': LR 2.208 (Ms). 'Of the understanding': 2.194 (Ms). Of 'prosaic expediency': LH 291–2; cf. Carcopino's traditional assessment of Roman religion as a 'prosaic utilitarianism' (1964 [1941]: 137).

Moritz closely identifies Roman and Greek religiosity as products of the spontaneous imagination, Hegel sharply differentiates them. His aesthetic Greeks divine essential ideas in nature and image them as life-affirming free personalities. The practical understanding of Hegel's Romans, by contrast, makes them more aware of nature's stubborn otherness, and so they posit behind its resistance gods that are hidden, mysterious, and in need of propitiation. Again, in their 'dull, stupid subjectivity' they can see externals only as bare objects—as dull as their own selves—and so when they conceptualize their *numina*, they cannot image them as beautiful ideals. They can intuit no 'spiritual objectivity' in nature, and can project only their own minute prosaic purposes onto the divine other.⁵⁷ So the Roman gods are grounded in subjective concepts—both 'finite' and transparent, yet also indefinite in number. Myriads of faceless deities control every aspect of experience, and in demanding submission to their inscrutable power, Roman *religio* becomes 'the religion of unfreedom'.⁵⁸ By thus reconstructing the psychology or 'spirit' behind Roman religion—the self-insistent subjectivity that with its narrow, 'finite' purposes can venerate gods only as impersonal means to *its* end—Hegel attempts to sympathetically understand the legions of strange, 'useful' gods in Moritz's book: the Lares and Penates that safeguard the family; the Jupiter with 300–400 *nomina appellativa* specifying his separate functions as *Capitolinus* (protector of the Capitoline), *Latialis* (protector of Latium), *Stator* (of steadfastness in battle), *Pistor* (god of bakers), and so forth; Juno *Fornax* (goddess of ovens) and as well as *Pax*, *Tranquillitas*, *Vacuna*, *Rubigo*, *Febris*, *Cloacina*, as if the worship of such beings could itself bring bread, peace, serenity, leisure, freedom from mildew and fever, and clean sewers. Finite purposes can range from opening a door to securing 'this year's harvest', from winning victory in this battle to furthering the welfare of the entire state. Whether trivial or totalizing, some conceptual *Zweck* is the determining cause of each domestic, agricultural, and urban deity; finite purposes lie behind the allegorical gods, the foreign gods like Cybele and Asclepius introduced in times of crisis, and ultimately the divinity of *Fortuna Romana* and the emperors.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ 'Dull, stupid subjectivity': *LH* 290; cf. 304. Hidden, mysterious, indeterminate gods: *LR* 2.214–15 (Ms). Difficulties of sympathetically grasping 'how such things can be venerated as gods': 2.506.

⁵⁸ *LR* 2.509.

⁵⁹ Main list of gods, festivals: *LR* 2.505–7. 'This year's harvest': 2.211 (Ms). In all this, Hegel does not draw directly on Augustine's *City of God* (an unfortunate omission), either for instances of what Augustine satirizes as a 'cloud' of deities (III.12 et al.), or the association of Roman religion with utilitarian desire (esp. IV.22, following Varro), or the argument that the

This *Fortuna* hovers behind the myriad Roman gods in a way analogous to the way Fate lurks behind the Greek pantheon. But while the Greeks' Fate tends to cancel the purposes of individuals, no matter how heroic, Roman *Fortuna* is the universal 'consent to particular purposes' in their discrete singularity, and so, far from cancelling individual purposes, *Fortuna Publica* potentially brings them all to fulfilment: as the inner principle of Rome's innumerable divinities, she becomes in time *the* goddess of Rome, bringing about 'the universal prosperity that is the destiny of the Roman empire'.⁶⁰ This *Fortuna* was naturally associated with the emperor, who as font of benefits and ultimate guarantor of Roman well-being, could logically be worshipped as the god presiding over the empire. Cults of *Roma*, *Fortuna*, and the emperor's *genius* are therefore, for Hegel, only extensions of the basic religious disposition that sought to propitiate Fever, say, as an uncanny but pliable power. Thus, while modern surveys often emphasize the principles *do ut des* ('I give so that you may give') as the core of the Roman's practical, even contractual relation to the gods, Hegel makes a similar but more involved point: the Roman divinizes moments of his own prosaic consciousness, binds himself by rigid formulas to these rigid abstractions, not out of awe, gratitude, love, or genuinely spiritual transport, but primarily from self-interest. This is a narrow kind of self-mediation, and yet, for the Roman mind, every perceived need has a god to answer it; *anything* can be divinized, 'provided it appears essential for the common needs'.⁶¹ As a result, Roman religion is the most prolific of all, and even though its native

Romans should have economized by substituting for their 'minute and single gods' (IV.21) more inclusive notions like *Felicitas*, *Fortuna*, and *Fatum*, which for Augustine presage belief in the single Creator of all (I-V). Nor does Hegel reflect much on the divine personifications present in Greek religion, especially from the fourth century BC (Burkert 1985: 185–6; Herrin and Stafford 2005).

⁶⁰ LR 2.212–3 (Ms). *Fortuna* as centre of Roman religious pluralism: LR 2.206. As 'consent to particular purposes', *Fortuna* recalls Hobbes's 'felicity' (*Leviathan*, Chapter 6: 'continual success in obtaining those things which a man from time to time desireth, that is to say, continual prospering'), but more immediately Kant's analysis of *Glück* as the *contingent* correspondence of external conditions and internal purposes: for Hegel, Roman *Fortuna* is that which guarantees a complete, albeit empirical, 'happiness'. Hegel's approach is complemented by Perowne's discussion of 'the general "My will be done" attitude' of Roman religion (1983: 53) and by the generalization in Cicero's *De Natura Deorum* 3.87 that nobody thanks the gods because *they* are good, but because they give wealth, honour, worldly success.

⁶¹ LR 2.506.

gods are not strongly anthropomorphic, it effects a religious self-mediation more far-reaching than that of the Greek Olympians.⁶²

A religion of subjective purposiveness can only inspire a *cultus* as utilitarian and prosaic as itself. Beholden to his deities for good fortune, Hegel's Roman regards them as equally beholden to him for worship. Only 'a relation of constraint and dependence' could subsist between god and worshipper (as between patron and client), and so Roman worship was a *religio* of 'unfreedom' as it 'bound' (*ligavit*) both sides to rigid rituals. Strict rules regimented ceremonies of contracts, meals, *confarreationes*, auguries, consultations of Sibylline books, holding assemblies, convening the Senate, taking up office, and so forth; the slightest, ill-omened mistake could halt proceedings. This punctiliousness made the Romans extremely 'religious' in one sense, and they prided themselves on being the most pious of peoples.⁶³ Yet for all their earnestness (so opposite to Greek 'cheerfulness'), no deep spirituality lay hidden beneath their quasi-magical rituals. So long as the external formulas were followed to satisfy and bind the *numina*, worshippers were free to think what they liked. And so in the 'mere subjective certainty of [his] own existence', uninspired by any sacred awe or flights of imaginative insight, Hegel's plain Roman tended to think about his own prosaic wants, and to pursue them. Behind a façade of fastidious piety, then, rituals were easily manipulated for subjective purposes.⁶⁴ Roman religion became an ancilla of politics, and doubly so when elites held elective priesthoods, often alongside other offices: an arrangement that was especially contentious during the Conflict of the Orders, as patricians monopolized the *sacra* (priestly colleges, calendar, religious law) for their own corporate benefit.

Beyond particular party or class interests, religion served the broader purposes of an aggressive and expansionary state. Hegel notes with interest

⁶² Roman religion 'the richest in continually discovering and bringing forth new gods' (LR 2.207 (Ms)); cf. 2.110–11 ('constantly' devising 'new gods, new forms of worship, ceremonies, sacrifices, *lectisternia*', in contrast with e.g. Athenian responses to the plague (Thucydides 2.47)).

⁶³ Rome most pious, according to Cicero (e.g. *De Natura Deorum* 2.8): LR 2.508 could have alluded to much else in the Romans' proud self-conception—early legends of divine foundations (Mars, Venus, Romulus, Numa), legends of pious patriots (e.g. Decimus Mus), the conceit that empire and the *pax deorum* were divine rewards for Roman *pietas*, Polybius 6.56, Cicero (e.g. *On the Responses of the Haruspices* 19), Livy (e.g. Preface 6, 11; 5.52), Virgil (e.g. *Aeneid* 1.279), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (2.72.3), and so on down to Julian and Augustine's *City of God*. Liebeschuetz (1979: 4) and Stark (2007: 112–55) credit such assertions of Romans' superlative religious intensity, but Hegel is more sceptical.

⁶⁴ Perowne offers examples of such manipulation (1983: 53–6), but Beard, North, and Price resist this style of 'purely political analysis' for the earlier Republic at least (1998, I.104–8).

how new gods were imported to avert crises, and new temples dedicated in response to needs met, vows heeded, victories won. He does not, indeed, analyse the *triumphus*, so central to the cults of Mars and Jupiter; or discuss the ritual *evocatio* of enemies' gods to Rome; or give a systematic catalogue of the gods of Latium, Etruria, Italy, Greece, and eventually Egypt, Syria, and the Orient that over centuries were relocated to Rome as its newest divine citizens.⁶⁵ But the general process he understands well and summarizes succinctly. The Roman pantheon and its attendant rituals grew in tandem with empire and the fluctuating fortunes of imperial expansion, giving the Romans their own peculiar 'theogony':

the [Roman] cultus is a theogony in progress—the universal necessity of the gods realized in singular events (victories, triumphs, situations, incidents, and so on). The divine is not the genuine, eternal, implicitly and explicitly ethical power. Fortune is indeterminate; the lordship of power exists only through particular victories or as a consequence of other events, i.e., as the successful accomplishment of particular purposes. It is particular needs, as it were, that call for particular gods and bring them into being.

(LR 2.509)

Violent wars ensconced Hesiod's Olympians over the Titanic powers of nature, but if Hegel glosses over this dark side of Greek religion, he thrusts into the foreground the imperial violence that powered the Roman 'theogony'. In this he reflects the common Roman belief that Mars himself had founded the city, and that the Romans' superlative piety was rewarded by the world's gods with world-domination. Yet if the Romans' disciplined purposiveness was rewarded by *Fortuna*, it was felt as harsh Fate by its imperial victims. This may explain why Hegel sometimes effectively conflates Rome with both Fortune and Fate. The fortunes of imperial expansion were varied, but in aggregate accumulated a power analogous to Fate: the ineluctable power that crushes difference to its abstract, universal *imperium*.⁶⁶ For when the legions crowned their conquests of Corinth, Athens,

⁶⁵ For the Roman triumph, see Beard 2007: 219–56. Livy 5.21 gives a prominent example of the *evocatio*: Juno being 'called out' of Veii in 396 bc. New gods and their year of formal introduction include Castor and Pollux (499 bc), Demeter/Ceres (496), Apollo (431), Aesculapius (292), Aphrodite/Venus of Eryx (217), Magna Mater of Pessinus (204); important moments and factors in the pantheon's expansion (especially in the third century bc) are discussed by Beard, North, and Price (1998, 1.61–72, 79–84).

⁶⁶ In *LH*, the opening paragraph on 'The Roman World' adapts Napoleon to regard Roman power as somehow mediating between Greek Fate and modern politics: it is the 'irresistible

and Jerusalem by 'plundering and destroying the temples and carrying off whole shiploads of gods to Rome'—there in the universal pantheon of the world-capital, Yahweh loses his sublimity, the Olympians are stripped of their beauty, and all ethnic gods are packed together 'side by side, so that they extinguish one another' and become equal subordinates of *Jupiter Capitolinus, Roma*, and her *Fortuna*.⁶⁷ This rough-handling has its theoretical counterpart in the 'cold reflections' of thinkers like Cicero who writes out exhaustive *lists* of Vulcans, Apollos, Jupiters with their local epithets.⁶⁸ Such bare catalogues strip the city-gods of their local colour—akin to the abstract understanding as it strips entities down to the bare universal. In places Hegel seems fleetingly to regret the loss of Olympian beauty and local difference to this crushing power: Rome's subjugation of foreign deities brings a veritable *Götterdämmerung*, in which all old, local, finite gods die.⁶⁹ And yet in tragedy, history, and thought itself, the crushing of finitude is necessary for deeper reconciliation. So too Roman practical and theoretical violence towards tribal gods fosters both scepticism about their finite reality, and yearning for more final realizations of divine unity. Roman conquests killed national gods in their *particularity*, yet simultaneously incorporated them as members of the *universal* pantheon. Reflective writers, analogously, conceive the divine in terms of an aggregate of *all* the gods. In both arenas, the Roman spirit adds discrete gods to its crowded pantheon, endlessly: a bad infinity that satisfies neither heart nor reason—and yet by its inchoate systematization prepares for the concrete infinite, and a truly unlimited satisfaction.

The violence inherent in the Roman *cultus* expresses itself also in the gladiatorial spectacles. Winckelmann had traced the custom back to the 'melancholy' Etruscans' ritual of holding 'bloody fights . . . at funerals and in public arenas', but Hegel follows Dionysius of Halicarnassus to hint at an

power of circumstances to which individuality must bend', and (in the religious sphere) is tasked with 'collecting all Deities and all Spirits into the Pantheon of Universal dominion, in order to make out of them an abstract universality of power' (278).

⁶⁷ LR 2.507. ⁶⁸ LR 2.506–7 with n.722, *De Natura Deorum* 3.

⁶⁹ Cf. PS §§453–78 where Hegel associates the 'death of God' with Rome's subjugation of foreign deities; Hodgson uses the specific language of *Götterdämmerung* (1987a: II.72, 86; cf. 2005: 37). In Eurocentric fashion, Hegel seems not to query Roman exaggerations of ruling an *imperium sine fine* over all peoples, with *all* gods incorporated into its pantheon: e.g. LR 2.213, 2.225 (Ms). In Virgil's hyperbole, Augustus' empire will spread 'past Garamant and India' (*Aeneid* 6.791–5); in the Hegelian scheme, Rome's religious *Aufhebung* may include Greek and some Oriental religions (Egyptian, Syrian, Jewish, Persian) overtly, and others (of India, China) more implicitly.

initially Greek origin.⁷⁰ This allows Hegel to juxtapose Greek games and Roman spectacles as dialectical twins and opposites, while Winckelmann and Schiller had simply contrasted 'the humanity of the Greeks and the fierceness of the Romans'.⁷¹ In *LH* he opposes the profound spiritual insight with which the Greeks transformed agricultural festivals with tragic choruses and other artistic competitions and into which the Greek entered 'with their whole souls'—with the 'buffoonery' and 'scurrilous dances and songs' that the Romans gawped at during their holidays. Nor did their tragedies (as represented by Seneca) contain anything except 'what is empty, ugly, and horrible'.⁷² This duality of empty inner self and cruel external show takes most sinister form in the spectacles of animal hunts, executions, and gladiatorial contests—so different to the Greek tragic conflicts, whose fundamental passions the Greeks relived as they watched:

In place of human sufferings in the depths of the soul and spirit, occasioned by the contradictions of life, and which find their solution in Destiny, the Romans instituted a cruel reality of corporeal sufferings: blood in streams, the rattle in the throat which signals death, and the expiring gasp were the scenes that delighted them. (*LH* 294)

Indeed these spectacles 'mark the acme' of Roman religious experience; these spectacles they 'loved best'. It is these mass events, therefore, rather than Virgilian *pietas*, that exemplify for Hegel the Roman spirit of self-sacrifice before an abstract state. And yet it seems so mindless: gladiators, criminals, and animal victims herded into death—for no other purpose than the pleasure of the mob, the 'empty caprice' of the organizers, the inscrutable purposes of the nameless system that put them there. Thus, the great *cultus* of the Roman world, uniting patrician, citizen, criminal, and slave alike,

⁷⁰ Winckelmann 2006 [1763]: 160. The Romans 'took over not only Greek gods but also Greek games and spectacles': *LR* 2.510; for Dionysius' argument, see Schultze 2004.

⁷¹ Winckelmann notes that Roman-style games ever remained 'a horror to the civilized Greeks' (*History of Ancient Art* §§10–12): the likely source for Schiller's contrast of Greek 'humanity' and Roman 'fierceness', of Greek athletics with 'the Roman people gloating over the agony of a gladiator' (*Aesthetic Education*, Letter XV); and perhaps for Weil's assertion that 'in Rome gladiatorial fights took the place of tragedy' (2005: 213). Hegel explores the contrast in all versions of *LR*. The contrast of Roman triumphs and Greek *agōnes* as 'the greatest heights which men could reach' is an ancient one, made by Virgil and Horace (E. Fraenkel 1957: 266).

⁷² Greek versus Roman festivals: *LR* 2.293–4. Roman tragedy: *LR* 2.221 (Ms).

seems in its pointless violence to be the final self-refutation of this religion of purposiveness.⁷³

The contrast with Greek tragic festivals is not the only one informing Hegel's assessment of the Roman games. Even more important is their relation to the 'spectacle' of the Via Dolorosa, Calvary and Golgotha. For, unlike Greek tragedies, the Roman games are no mere aesthetic show or merely 'spiritual history': they are a 'cruel *reality*', with fighters *actually* dying as a sacrifice for the people. Moreover, for the Romans these popular events constituted the 'supreme event of history, the highest manifestation of the fate which for the Greeks had essentially been an ethical transformation'.⁷⁴ For Christians, by contrast, the supreme event of history, the true *peripeteia* and manifestation of divine providence, is the Incarnation. So where a Tertullian had fleetingly contrasted the Roman spectacles with Christ's Passion, Hegel draws out his sense of the dialectical continuity between the two.⁷⁵ The Passion also sees a 'criminal' accepting death through the agency of a distant, abstract state—a sacrifice of self for the benefit of all mankind—and though this particular death initially seems purposeless, it nevertheless accomplishes the most universal purpose of all: the conquest of death through death itself. The later *cultus* of the Eucharist both relives the tragedy of Christ's Passion, and finds spiritual renewal through and beyond the breaking of His body: it is as if through the Eucharistic breaking of bread, Hegel would hear the distant echoes of the gladiators' 'rattle in the throat'.

Hegel's world-historical juxtapositions of religions aim to illuminate the differences and commonalities of each. A religion of utility, will, and imperial expansion that culminates in spectacles of mindless violence, Roman religion seems ostensibly the antithesis of Greek beauty, of Christian spirituality, and therefore even of the religious itself. But a broader perspective recognizes in it the 'negative' moment necessary for true religion. Greek tragedies, Roman spectacles, and the Christian Eucharist face the terrors of finitude—each more concretely than the last. Greeks idealized suffering by banishing from stage the actual ugliness of dying itself; Romans exulted mindlessly in spectacles of violent death; Christians contemplate a Passion more horrific than most suffered in the arena, yet one that achieves a reconciliation firmer than Aeschylean resolution or Aristophanic laughter.

⁷³ This paragraph draws mainly on LR 2.220–3 (Ms), 2.510. 'Acme': 2.510. 'Loved best': 2.222. 'Empty caprice': 2.510, cf. 2.223.

⁷⁴ Not a 'spiritual history but one that was actually happening': LR 2.222. 'Supreme event': 2.223 (Ms).

⁷⁵ Tertullian *De Spectaculis* 29 ('vis autem et sanguinis aliquid? Habes Christi').

Roman religion thus mediates between the Greek and Christian by beginning to sacralize actual suffering. It does so also by further particularizing divine purpose. Here, Yahweh has only *one* purpose in attending to His chosen people; the Olympians pursue their *many*, separate, general purposes, as gods of this or that natural and ethical domain; the Roman gods serve purposes that are so definite they proliferate endlessly, and can only be summed up as moments of the 'goddess' *Fortuna*, or *Roma*, the goal that seems to encompass *all* temporal striving; beyond this again is Christ, who effects the most concrete and universal purpose of all—the 'bliss' gained through and beyond experience, in all its guises. Both suffering and purposive labour are necessary moments in any religious consciousness, but in Hegel's schematic they tend to be concentrated on one name: Rome. Rome is the harsh 'manhood' of world-history. Rome tempers Greek serenity with 'the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labour of the negative'.⁷⁶ In its terrifying sanctification of suffering and labour, 'the Roman world is the most important point of transition to the Christian religion, the indispensable link'.⁷⁷

The most specific moment of transition occurs for Hegel in the late Republic and early Empire, when Roman power is concentrated in the 'divine' emperors. The dynamic of Roman purposiveness had led to the divinization of *Fortuna* as the power bestowing universal happiness, and 'the obvious next step', Hegel writes, 'was to worship . . . the *individual* presence of that good fortune, as a god in whose hands it rested'. Hegel recognizes historical precedents for this notion of a man-god: not Oriental, but Greek, in that Alexander, Demetrius Phalereus 'and others' represent the Greek world groping 'its way to the idea of a God becoming man, and that not as a remote and foreign image, but as a present God in a godless world'.⁷⁸ This idea would find more fertile soil in the 'logic' of the

⁷⁶ So one might read PS §19: 'Thus the life of God and divine cognition may well be spoken of as a disporting of Love with itself [i.e. carefree Greek divinity]; but this idea sinks into mere edification, and even insipidity, if it lacks the seriousness, the suffering (*Schmerz*), the patience, and the labour (*Arbeit*) of the negative' [i.e. Roman, Christian]. For Rome brings 'the severe labours of the Manhood of History' (LH 107), the 'Discipline of the World' (320).

⁷⁷ LR 2.226 (Ms).

⁷⁸ LP 2.125. Tacitus' notion of *Graeca adulatio* (Annals 6.18) epitomizes older analyses of emperor worship: mythic (Hercules, Romulus) and historic precedents (e.g. Hellenistic 'saviour' kings, Roman generals such as Pompey accorded 'divine' honours in the East) prepared the ground for political manipulation by elites, superstitious credulity (or sceptical satire) among the people (e.g. L. Taylor 1931; cf. Beard, North, and Price 1998: 140–9). Peppard contrasts newer approaches (2011: 30–44), but fails to mention Hegel, whose proto-sociological analysis also takes its start from Roman cult—not Cicero or the 'Christian' assumption of the 'absolute'

Roman mind. As the incarnation of Rome's genius and Fortune, and of effective power over grain supply, water, inheritances, and *all* other 'finite human purposes',⁷⁹ the Roman emperors subsume in themselves all 'gods', and so appear as absolute persons with seemingly unbounded power over everything. The Roman emperor thus becomes both the product of human purposes, and the manifestation of the divine plenitude itself. In Christological terms, he is both man and God.⁸⁰ He proves a false saviour, however. The vices of individual emperors make the system seem capricious and arbitrary, incapable of satisfying human desire. Result: alienation from the state, disenchantment, scepticism, despair, a 'monstrous unhappiness and a universal sorrow'. And yet, the suffering that constitutes Roman history proves to be in fact propaedeutic for a new rebirth of the spirit:

This abstract power [of emperors] brought into the world the monstrous unhappiness and anguish that were to be the birthpangs for the religion of truth. It was by renouncing satisfaction in this world that the soil for the true religion was prepared. And in the fullness of time, i.e., when this state of despair had been brought about in the spirit of the world, God sent his Son.⁸¹

otherness of God. So too Gadel's argument—that emperor worship draws on Roman cultic worship of beings perceived to be powerful patrons (e.g. divinities, *paterfamilias*)—is compatible with Hegel's 'religion of expediency', though only the owl of Minerva (2002: 1), and not Hegel, is mentioned! More revisionist still is Amitay, who in claiming the divinized Alexander as 'a unique forerunner of Christ' (2010: 7), looks back to Droysen (2)—and thus indirectly to Hegel, whose lectures on world history Droysen attended.

⁷⁹ LR 2.223–4 (Ms).

⁸⁰ This monistic identity-in-difference is sometimes expressed in Leibnizian terms: the divine emperor is the '*monas monadum*' (LH 320), or as 'the One, the actually present God—himself the singularity of the divine will as the power over all the other infinitely many singular wills' (LR 2.229 (Ms)). Such statements as LR 2.224–5 ('For the Romans, sunk as they were in finitude, there was nothing higher than this individual, this power over their finite purposes. They were utterly at a loss: there were no principles, no institutions of the state, nothing sacred they were prepared to set against him') may owe something to Gibbon's remarks on the emperor's ineluctable power (1994: 33, Chapter 3).

⁸¹ LR 2.760 (1831); cf. LR 2.224–5, 2.229 (Ms), LH 386–7. Similar ideas about the transition to Christianity recur in Flaubert: 'the melancholy of the antique world seems to me more profound than that of the moderns, all of whom more or less imply that beyond the dark void lies immortality... Just when the gods had ceased to be and the Christ had not yet come, there was a unique moment in history, between Cicero and Marcus Aurelius, when man stood alone' (1982: 20). Flaubert's intuition inspired Yourcenar's *Memoirs of Hadrian* (1990: 7) and may bear some relation to Dodds's 'age of anxiety' (1965).

In a phrase, Christ (and not Augustus) emerges as the saviour of the Roman world, the true man-god who satisfies the human heart in its *infinite* aspirations. The juxtaposition of Augustus and Christ was an important one to early Apologists and Church Fathers, and in reworking it, Hegel offers both the elements of a 'Christology from below', and a theological argument about the nature of God. The historical argument is that the deep unrest of the late Republic cried out for a 'prince of peace'—Augustus closed the 'Gates of War', but in a deeper sense it was Christ who brought the peace of full spiritual reconciliation.

This thesis that Christianity is a phenomenon of the *Roman* world leads sometimes to startling theological omissions and implications. At least in his summary in *LH*, Hegel gives surprisingly little attention to how Old Testament notions of deity, law, kingship, covenant, prophecy, and priesthood are reworked in the New Testament.⁸² A vast theological tradition is almost glossed over when he writes that there had been kept in reserve against the emergency of the times a singular people whose singular religion would provide the leaven for a new dispensation. Situated between the Orient and Roman Mediterranean, the Jews are a liminal people, whose 'religion of sublimity' is redolent both of Oriental abstractions and of the (Roman) 'unhappy consciousness' that craves satisfaction beyond natural finitude.⁸³ This consciousness is crystallized (for Hegel) in the foundational myth of the Fall: Adamic man, driven from Eden, must work out salvation by the sweat of his brow. But Hegel's Jews seem to neglect this ancestral outlook, until 'driven back' to it by the vast 'unhappiness' of the Roman world—not least in the era between the sieges of Jerusalem by Pompey (63 BC) and Titus (70 AD), that is, in the time of Jesus, the 'new Adam'. Driven back then to the sublimity of a hopeful despair, purifying the yearnings of the Roman world, and open to the Spirit itself, the deracinated Jews (and especially their humblest representatives) become the first seedbed of Christianity.⁸⁴ In some such way—the details are murky, and the term

⁸² Hegel sometimes betrays a positive repugnance to the Old Testament as 'something past, something merely historical', a hopeless blend of genuine holiness and insight with the irrationality of primitive sensuality, human sacrifice, and 'the extermination of the nations' (*LP* 2.108). Such passages reflect Hegel's ambivalent views of Judaism, ancient and modern, on which see e.g. Hodgson 2005: 228–37, Mack 2003: 42–62. Stewart documents Hegel's lifelong interest in Judaism (2018: 198–203), but Von der Luft notes that Hegel, despite improving his knowledge of Judaism through the 1820s, remained 'profoundly ignorant of the post-Davidic period' (1989: 364).

⁸³ Israel 'between' Orient and 'finitude of the West': *LR* 2.231 (Ms).

⁸⁴ Jews of Jesus' era, humbled, atomized, unhappy, 'driven back to the standpoint of that primeval *mythus*': *LH* 321–2. Myth of the Fall, interpreted with remarks about Roman

'Messiah', for example, does not appear in *LH* or *LR*—Hegel does slight honour to the fact that Christianity arose out of Judaism, and is more exercised to assimilate both to the dynamic of the Roman world.⁸⁵ It is as if Yahweh's sublime being and the Olympians' beautiful subjectivity find their place in Rome's pantheon, whose universal but finite purposiveness they energize with a new urgency: Christ is born, 'son of the most high', the sublime and truly infinite individual in whom all can recognize their essential purposes and selves. Certainly, in Hegel's schema, Christ as God-made-flesh is a necessary self-evolution of the Concept, and the Incarnation is *the* divine accommodation glimpsed darkly by previous 'finite' religions, even as he struggles to locate it precisely as the culminating truth of the Roman world—and of ancient Judaism. It may well be that the plain prose histories of the Gospels, compiled by the humblest Jews, are a fitting crown to the 'prose' of the Roman world and its crushing wars. More convincing is the assertion that Christianity's perfect 'picture-language' appeals to fishermen and philosophers alike, and thus has an earthy 'grandeur' that anticipates the concrete ideas in Hegel's own lectures on religion.⁸⁶

Hegel's complex (and idiosyncratic) historico-theological exploration of Roman religion and early Christianity serves also as an implicit criticism of other contemporary approaches to religion.⁸⁷ Perhaps most influential and endemic in modern thought about religion is utilitarianism: embryonic in Hobbes, pervasive in the *philosophes*, championed by revolutionary leaders, and theorized by Bentham (1748–1832), the 'last of the English *philosophes*'. A strident atheist, Bentham preached his vision of a secular utopia with self-consciously messianic fervour. His gospel would influence

'unhappiness' and 'the new Adam': *LR* 3.308 (1827), 3.107–9 (Ms), respectively; Mack compares the conjoined Judaic and Roman responses to *Schmerz* (2003: 61–2).

⁸⁵ 'Jesus appeared on the scene in the Roman world and among the Jewish people in particular' (*LR* 3.116 (Ms)): the emphasis, writ-large in Section III of *LH*, is explored by Von der Luft 1989: 367–8.

⁸⁶ Christianity's 'grandeur' (*Größe*) consists in its making Christ's personal history the vehicle of 'profoundest thought', and thus 'adapted to every grade of culture': *LH* 331.

⁸⁷ Hegel's Rome can serve as a proxy for contemporary themes: Jesus' revolutionary Sermon on the Mount is 'so to speak, sansculottism' (*LR* 3.119 (Ms)); Pilate's sceptical 'What is truth?' sounds the keynote of the *modern* era, with its 'quest for private welfare and enjoyment', dismissal of objective truth, 'finitude [turned] in upon itself, arrogant barrenness and lack of content, the extremity of self-satisfied dis-enlightenment [*Ausklärung*]' (3.159–60 (Ms)); and, most broadly, wars, alienation, atomic subjectivity, politico-utilitarian religions and practical atheism make the Napoleonic era a 'birth-time and a period of transition to a new era' (PS §11)—not unlike the Rome of Hegel's Augustus; cf. *LH* 446, Hodgson 2005: 37, and Cristi on 'Roman liberalism' (2005: 129–42).

classical scholarship via George Grote, who substantially reworked and published Bentham's *Analysis of the Influence of Natural Religion On the Temporal Happiness of Mankind* (1822) before turning to his scholarly works on Greek history and Plato.⁸⁸ The greatest name among the 'enlightened' *philosophes*, however, was Gibbon—whose history Hegel knew. Gibbon's famous epigram about the religions of the Roman Empire is pregnant with consideration, not least his own latent utilitarianism:

The various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people, as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord.

(1994: 12, Chapter 2)

One might find in the epigram a dialectical progression, as superstition and atheism are turned by the tolerant Roman magistrate to equally good *use*. Hegel for his part bypasses such thoughts as he points out that systematic purposiveness is not an immediate or natural attitude: still less is it adequate to the full range of religious experience, let alone commensurate with reason. Roman *Verstand*, with its thoroughgoing purposiveness, is just *one* moment within the evolution of religion and the Concept. Hegel's placing of *the* 'religion of utility' in Roman antiquity, and his unflattering description of a prosaic, self-serving, and even vacuous Roman cult, destined to be replaced by Christian spirituality, amounts to a quiet riposte to contemporary utilitarian-types, whose thinking is not so advanced as they think.⁸⁹

A more challenging rival was Schleiermacher. He defined religion as the 'feeling of absolute dependence' and argued that the highest faculty of religious 'feeling' allows the 'miracle of direct relationship with the infinite' (*On Religion*). For Hegel (ever a critic of Romanticizing vagueness), mere 'feeling' cannot adequately grasp any whole and so Schleiermacher's theory cannot describe religion *per se*. There may then be a hint of malice against his old enemy when he echoes his theory and words to define Roman religion as

⁸⁸ On Bentham, Mill, and Grote, see Gibbins 2014, Fuller 2014, Gooch 1913: 312–18.

⁸⁹ Walton 1983 locates Hegel's main criticisms of utilitarianism in his assessment of Epicureanism: one might add that Hegel associates the Hellenistic schools with the more self-centred, *Roman spirit*.

the self-seeking of the worshippers *that intuit itself in them [the gods] as power*, and that seeks satisfaction in and from them <for a subjective interest>. Human self-seeking (a) is inwardly determined, human beings in their particularity being infinite purpose for themselves; (b) has the *feeling of its dependence, precisely because it is finite, and this feeling is peculiar to it*. Orientals who live in the light, Hindus who submerge their consciousness and self-consciousness in Brahma, the Greeks who surrender their particular purposes in necessity and intuition... *All live in their religion without this feeling of dependence.*⁹⁰

Here, Oriental and Greek religions are *not* defined by a feeling of dependence. And where this Schleiermacherian feeling is paramount, in the Romans' peculiar utilitarianism, it points more profoundly to religion as self-mediation. For in the Roman case, worshippers feel dependent on a swarm of useful, powerful, objective others—but are not yet conscious that these mirror their *own* power and infinite purpose, and that they are thus exemplifications of Absolute Spirit which embraces subjective and objective as mirroring 'others' within itself. Roman religion, *qua* religion, is another form of such self-mediation, as is underscored again by the description of its cult as the

process by which self-consciousness *gives itself the certainty of the identity of the divine essence with itself*, and enjoys and celebrates this. But here interest begins from the subjective; the worshippers' needs and requirements and the dependence that they create are what make them pious, and their cultus consists in positing a power to help them in their need.⁹¹

The accent here on subjective feeling and purpose aligns the Roman mind, again, with the modern. In other contexts, Hegel searches for Greek precedents. In trying to explain the 'infinite importance and necessity of Roman religion' as 'the indispensable link' between finite religions and Christianity, Hegel rather paradoxically characterizes the Roman mind as 'infinite reflection, infinite form without content or substantiality... unlimited finitude, limitedness that is self-absolute in its finitude'. What this 'logic' may attempt to conceptualize is how the Roman imperial pantheon *endlessly* added gods to

⁹⁰ 2.209 (Ms, italics added); cf. 2.508.

⁹¹ LR 2.210 (Ms).

its aggregate of singular, *finite*, human/divine purposes: a 'bad' infinity not yet cognizant of the truly infinite content that it craves. The moment (Hegel goes on) is directly analogous to the spiritual void created by the Sophists in the Greek world: Protagoras' motto, 'Man is the measure of all things, i.e. the human being with his immediate wishes, desires, purposes, interests, and feelings', describes also the purposive, self-centred Roman religious self before the revelation of Christ.⁹² It is another striking juxtaposition of Rome and Periclean Athens, and another attempt to show how Roman religion mediates between its Greek predecessor and Christian successor: very particular, utilitarian gods mediate between general Olympian 'powers' and the omnipotent Spirit; the expansive pantheon between Greek theogony and Christian Trinity; gladiatorial spectacles between Greek tragedy and Christian Eucharist; absolute emperors between anthropomorphic deities and Jesus Christ; and grasping subjective need between naïve Greek cheerfulness and the confidence of Christian faith.

4.4. Early Christianity and Late Antiquity

Hegel's theory of the dialectical relationship of Greek, Roman, and Christian religions thus draws together a remarkable constellation of factors: historicist detail, comparative judgment, social evolution, theological argument.⁹³ Most broadly, in arguing for continuity between the Roman world and Christian revolution, it looks back to ancient Patristic, and forward to modern sociological, orthodoxies that the Roman Empire provided the conditions for the spread (perhaps even the origins) of Christianity: for the devout, Rome was the providential medium in which Christianity could grow and triumph in the 'fullness of time';⁹⁴ for the more neutral observer, Rome provided the peace, rule of law, roads, *lingua franca*, and single 'market' for new gods to travel from Jerusalem to London and beyond; it provided also the conceptual resources (e.g. libraries, Platonism) for more

⁹² Discussion: *LR* 2.226–9 (Ms).

⁹³ For Phillips, 'the large-scale urgently needs to return to the study of Roman religion' (2007: 26): could Hegel's *LR* help, given that they cover 'extensively practically all known major world religions' (Labuschagne and Slootweg 2012: xxii)?

⁹⁴ The providential view of the Roman Empire is first found in Melito's *Apology* (Eusebius *Historia Ecclesiastica* 4.26.7), is developed by Philo and Origen, and is systematized by Eusebius: see Ophelt 1961; Wengst 1987: 7–8 and *passim*.

systematic interpretations of scriptural narratives.⁹⁵ On the other hand, in viewing Roman utility and Christian spirituality as religious opposites, Hegel introduces a rift between the two: Christian asceticism and dualism, Roman pogroms and persecutions. In all, his dialectical history posits that the ‘monstrous unhappiness’ bound up in Rome’s good fortune and imperial peace also contributed to the making of the peace of Christ.⁹⁶ Roman and Christian become thus polar opposites, inextricably intertwined, and ultimately ‘identical’. The perennial worldly intertwining of the City of Man (e.g. Rome) and City of God is the great theme of Augustine’s *City of God*. Hegel strangely ignores the work, and in his more linear understanding of divine providence sees the declining Empire all but eclipsed by the rising ‘kingdom of God’. His account of Roman history after Jesus (in *LH*) ignores almost everything but the growth of the Church, yet in this ecclesiastical material Hegel discerns his own dialectic germinating: the Incarnation and the Gospels provided the *universal* ‘concept’, which guided the Church in its *particular* relations to the external Roman world and Greek culture, and in doing so shaped its *individual* political identity and internal dogma.

At the head of this development stand the Gospels, whose ‘main theme’ is not miracles—impressive only to the spiritually superficial—but repentance. To repent (in Hegel’s terms) is to give up one’s natural particularity and become a universal person, infinite in spirit. In the Beatitudes, therefore, all family and social relations as well as all ignominy, persecution, and poverty are as nothing before the glory and love of God, and so one should not hesitate to sell one’s possessions, forsake father and mother, pluck out one’s right eye if it offend, and seek before everything the Kingdom, for it is only through suffering the loss of the particular that one gains purity of heart, riches, and life everlasting.⁹⁷ Here then, at the outset of Christian self-definition, the natural seems opposed to the spiritual, and suffering becomes ‘henceforth recognized as an instrument necessary’ for transcending this vale of tears and unifying with God.⁹⁸ Christ’s Passion hallows suffering, both physical and mental, and each believer is called upon to take up his cross on the *via dolorosa*, confident that ‘he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it’ (Matthew 10:39, KJV). Suffering (as we have seen) is for Hegel

⁹⁵ Stark 1997 explores differences, and L. Wilkinson 1975: 182–203 (‘The seed ground of Christianity’) continuities between Roman and Christian values. On Christianity and ancient philosophy, see e.g. Karamanolis 2013.

⁹⁶ Wengst 1987, Stark 1997, and Hart 2009 contrast Rome’s harsh and hierarchical culture with Christianity’s more egalitarian, pacific morality.

⁹⁷ *LH* 326–7. ⁹⁸ *LH* 324; cf. 326–8.

the specifically 'Roman' discipline. As the 'truth' of the Roman world, Christ's suffering epitomizes the diremption of nature and history, and so Christian ascetics relive in miniature the Roman trajectory from external negativities to spiritual salvation. Into such thoughts, Hegel slips in his own, heterodox twist. Christ becomes a prophet a 'pure self-consciousness', for in Christ,

the idea of eternal truth is recognized, the essence of man acknowledged to be Spirit, and the fact proclaimed that only by stripping himself of his finiteness and *surrendering himself to pure self-consciousness*, does he attain the truth. Christ—man as man—in whom the unity of God and man has appeared, has in his death, and his history generally, himself presented the eternal history of Spirit—a history which every man has to accomplish in himself, in order to exist as Spirit, or to become a child of God, a citizen of his kingdom.⁹⁹

In refusing to regard Jesus as a miracle-worker, healer, or even mere rabbi, Hegel delves beneath the literal content of much scripture to what he perceives to be its spiritual core. The consequences of this quasi-allegorical approach may in fact put Hegel in tension with the Lutheran *dicta* that each man is his own priest, that study of the Bible is sufficient for faith (*sola Scriptura*), and that Christ is the sole mediator between man and God. For Hegel, an overly narrow worship of the *person* of Christ effectively revives the idolatry of Greek anthropomorphism—a fault of medieval Christianity as a whole, with its *iconodouleia*, mania for relics, its zeal to walk the Holy Land and enter Christ's Tomb.¹⁰⁰ Such an overly literalistic Christianity forgets that 'the true is the whole', and that because Christ preached the

⁹⁹ LH 328, italics added; cf. LP 3.5.

¹⁰⁰ Before medieval worship of relics (e.g. of Christ's body), 'our thoughts naturally revert to the Greek anthropomorphism': LH 324–5. Therefore, in the Crusaders' disappointment to find the tomb empty, Hegel detects one beginning of modern 'self-reliance and spontaneous activity': the free individual replaces the sensuous Host of Catholicism as 'that definite embodiment of being which is of a divine nature' (LH 392–3), and looks forward to prosaic Protestants, for whom 'the Host was simply dough, the relics of the Saints mere bones' (LH 440); cf. Stepelevich 1992: 685; Jonkers 2012: 195–6. Furthermore, Hegel's elevation of the *Spirit* of the risen Christ above the facticity of the person Jesus underlies criticisms of the emerging 'scientific' scholarship of the historical Jesus: attention to Jesus' particularity would make him an 'excellent, even impeccable individual', an exemplary rabbi or sage (as he was for Kant and Jefferson), or an ethical innovator like Socrates or Epictetus—but ultimately just a 'historical, bygone personality' (LH 325); cf. LH 325–6, 331 for criticisms of biblical historicism's tendencies to literalism, even fundamentalism.

universal *Spirit*, Christian truth is 'not limited to the teachings of Christ himself' but is 'unfolded' in the whole tradition—Apostolic teachings, the Church Fathers' assimilation of Roman institutions and Greek philosophy, and the centuries of exegesis, not excluding (one suspects) the final witness of Hegel's logico-historical synthesis, which claims to put a conclusive seal on the entire series.¹⁰¹

The significance of Christian repentance 'unfolds' most dramatically in the relations of the early Church to the external Roman world. Pursuing a spirituality above the profane, early Christians held aloof from pagan festivals and gladiatorial games, refused to worship the emperor or Rome, and so became objects of 'persecution and hate'.¹⁰² Yet in worshipping a generous, loving, and spiritual God, the Christian community could not maintain its initial jealous and quasi-Jewish separation. Its own 'inward infinity' impelled it to spread the Good News—or in Hegelian language, to expand itself into the actual infinity of a world remade in its likeness and image. The development of a fully Christian society Hegel regards as the centuries-long task of the 'Germanic' world and so he does not pay much explicit attention to its ancient beginnings: how the Catholic Church modelled itself on Roman administration, with a *pontifex maximus* (pope), prefectures, and dioceses; how old holy places were adapted to new use, the basilica form transferred from praetors to bishops, temples converted into churches, festivals into holy days, and even heroes into saints; how animal sacrifices were replaced by the sacrifice of the Mass, and spontaneous or ritual prayers by the systematic *Credo*—much here could be moulded into a Hegelian narrative of a 'way up' from natural substance to spiritual subjectivity. Hegel does capitalize on some of the overlap between early Christian theology and contemporary philosophy: where Socrates, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and Epictetus were said to have 'almost Christian souls', Hegel goes further to make Socrates' *daimōn* and the Stoics' 'inner god' forerunners of *his* Christ, prophet of 'pure self-consciousness'. So too Neoplatonic *Nous* foreshadows Hegelian Mind (in *LP*), and so one would expect (in *LR*) more attention to Platonizing figures like Origen, Clement, the Cappadocian Fathers, and Augustine—who synthesized the 'substance' of so much ancient thought with the keen self-consciousness of a believing 'subject'. Yet despite his own fascination with spiritualizing *Erinnerung*, Hegel ignores Augustine's

¹⁰¹ Christ's teachings 'unfolded' and 'completed' by Apostles, Christian community: *LH* 328. Does this edge Hegel, willy-nilly, towards a notion like the Catholic *magisterium*?

¹⁰² *LH* 329.

Confessions: a glaring omission that is magnified on a large scale when he cavalierly sums up medieval thought as a dull continuation of Greek philosophy, and dedicates less than a page to Thomas Aquinas.¹⁰³

One aspect of the new Christian culture that Hegel explores more minutely is the reverence for miracles, holy men, and pious allegory. The Roman religious mind had felt dependent upon *numina*, the natural and social powers which it personified as useful deities. After the Christian revolution, the order is reversed and determinate phenomena are made dependent upon the self-mediating subject that underlies them, i.e. upon God, the Creator.¹⁰⁴ This revolution of belief transforms the pagan reverence for prodigies, omens, and oracles into the Christian belief in miracles: strange phenomena are no longer the disquieting signs of uncanny *others*, but are domesticated as 'the servants of man, who, like a magician, can make them yield obedience'.¹⁰⁵ Yet, while likening miracle-working to magic, Hegel is also at pains to distinguish them: Oriental nature religions treated natural events as *immediately* divine, but in Christianity they are *mediately* so, i.e. creations of God. Therefore, the belief in miracles is not the superstition of magic (immediate control of nature), but a refusal to accept natural immediacy as ultimate. It is a 'disbelief in present nature' and indeed a downright 'contempt for nature' in its prosaic actuality. More abstractly, contingency, imperfection, evil, sin—the negativities of existence—are understood as what is *not* God: their deceptive solidity melts away before the presence of God, the touch of a holy hand. So the virtuous sage gives way to the saint, who cultivates the higher virtues of holiness and vanquishes nature in the symbolism of miracles.¹⁰⁶ At a more theoretical level is the

¹⁰³ Memory in Augustine's *Confessions* might well be compared with *Erinnerung* in Hegel's *PS*: in reflective thought, one grows aware of a God or Absolute whose constant presence throughout a process is known best at the end. Augustine might accept Hegel's statement that true philosophy is a form of prayer, i.e. 'elevation of the heart to God' (*LA* 2.827), but the Being to whom he elevates his heart remains both more intimately personal and more transcendently enigmatic than Hegel's Idea: 'tu eras interior intimo meo et superior summo meo' (*Confessions* 3.6.11). 'The first true "self-portrait" of European literature' (Brown 1971: 75), the *Confessions* limns a subjectivity more enigmatically 'divine' than its Hegelian successor. Aquinas: *LP* 3.71.

¹⁰⁴ For this reversal, see *LP* 2.386.

¹⁰⁵ *LP* 2.377. The complementary discussion in *LR* sees miracles first emerge as a 'category' in Jewish religion: the sublimity of Yahweh's manifestation is particularized in miracles, which suspend the 'prosaic' order of nature. But the truly miraculous manifestation is 'the spirit of humanity' (2.676–7 (1827)): in *LP*, Christian saints take on the sublimity of God—habitually, as it were. Accepted almost as prosaic facts, their miraculous deeds are a mere 'sign' of the essential, the inner spirit, and become superfluous the more nature is understood as God's self-disclosure.

¹⁰⁶ See *LP* 2.384. Hegel's thesis of an evolution from natural immediacy to 'divine' subjectivity is implicitly amplified by Peter Brown: 'Traditional paganism had expressed itself through

allegorization of the mythic and historical past: this is a 'disbelief in the past, or a disbelief that history was just what it was', a piercing through the finite letter to discover more resonant spiritual meanings.¹⁰⁷ In these ways, the Christian *cultus* continues the old Roman penetration of prosaic immediacies—with the difference that their inner essence is now not some purposive *numen*, but Christian Spirit.

Roman antiquity also lurks behind an emerging Orthodox Christianity, but if Hegel had treated early Catholicism with a certain grudging acceptance (its seemingly 'magical' practices being in reality not so), he is openly contemptuous of Byzantine religiosity. For Gibbon, Byzantine history with its mobs of monks and vicious theological quibbles confirmed only too well his argument that Rome suffered a long, internal decline due to religious 'superstition'. This Enlightenment inability to sympathize with Byzantine culture is magnified many times in Hegel's cursory account.¹⁰⁸ In *his* caricature, Orthodox piety lay like a patina over Roman Byzantium and did little to convert its ancient character: it was as if Greek argumentativeness and Roman legalism combined in the barren disputes about the Trinity and icons, fought over everywhere from bakeries to the Hippodrome.¹⁰⁹ Such theological passion does not signify to Hegel a fierce piety, or reveal how high Christological ideas were pervading daily life—the approach Hegel adopts towards Dutch genre paintings. The Byzantine synthesis of aesthetic worship and arcane argument was alien to Hegel's sensibilities, and he can only explain it by asserting that a true Christian 'spirit of the law' could not take root in an ancient city whose pagan roots stretched back a thousand years before its baptism as 'Constantinople'.

By contrast, the Germanic tribes who conquered the Roman west would be 'predestined', in Hegel's Lutheran scheme, to be the vehicles for true Christianity. Hegel's Goths, Vandals, Franks, Alemanni, and Suebi are animated not by a Greek awe before beauty, nor the Roman divinization

forms as impersonal as the universe itself: it mobilized feelings for sacred *things*—for ancient rites, for statues, for oracles, for vast beloved temples. The 'new mood', by contrast, threw up men—raw individuals who believed that they were the agents of vast forces. The men who really left their mark on the Roman world in the third and fourth centuries all believed that they were acting as 'servants' of God or of the gods, and drew lavishly on the supernatural for guidance and sanction in a puzzling age' (1971: 52).

¹⁰⁷ 'Disbelief' in various given immediacies: *LP* 2.377.

¹⁰⁸ Enlightenment blind spot: see Gooch 1913: 10–11.

¹⁰⁹ *LH* 339 (citing Gregory Nazianzen); Heine's discussion of 'the true idea of Christianity' reiterates these Hegelian views of Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism (1959 [1835]).

of purpose, but by reverence of the *heart*. This *Gemüth* had, from Romantics back to Eckhart, signified the 'mind' and total inner person; in Hegel's usage it becomes mind in an indeterminate mode, as it fastens on no particular object but ranges freely over all. This (in Hegel's construction) elucidates the important facts of early Germanic history: their 'barbarian dullness, mental confusion and vagueness', the inanity of their legal ideas, the emptiness of their religion, which had only a 'slight' hold over them and made them easy converts to Christianity. Many of these 'facts' seem to be culled ultimately from Tacitus, as are the two watchwords that crystallize Hegel's sense of the Germanic spirit: love of freedom and fidelity. The former was not an atomistic freedom, for the spirit of fidelity (*Treue*) would cause 'individuals [to] attach themselves with free choice to an individual, and without external prompting make this relation an inviolable one'. Tacitus refers to the bond of loyalty between a chief and his warriors, but Hegel claims more specifically that Germanic fidelity occurs 'neither among Greeks nor Romans'—not even among the Homeric warriors, who band together freely under the 'hegemony' of a king, for some *external* purpose.¹¹⁰ More profoundly, he would associate Germanic *Treue* with Christian faith (and indirectly, medieval chivalry): in both, the fiercely independent individual freely identifies himself with others in a bond of inviolable, articulated unity. It is as if the early Germanic bands of warrior-brothers were animated by the same spirit as the absolute, articulated Trinity.

Creative adaptation of ancient evidence thus enters into Hegel's validation of Germanic, and ultimately Lutheran Christianity. Yet, if the native spirit of *his* Germanic tribes would allow them to mould the true Christian *cultus*, Hegel still has over a millennium of pre-Reformation history to explain. Here his scattered suggestions about the continued legacy of Roman religion are striking. As we have seen, he detects a sharp split in the Roman religious mind between the inner self and external, mysterious *numina*. These cannot be known but merely appeased by repetition of

¹¹⁰ For references in this paragraph to the Germans as 'predestined' bearers of Christianity, see LH 351–4. Hegel cites 'the Romans' for their 'correct' focus on the ancient German love of liberty (*Freiheitsliebe*) 'from the first' (*anfangs*), and later names Tacitus. Indeed, his proto-feudal, quasi-Christian 'fidelity' may also have provenance in Tacitus' summary of the *comitatus* with its *praecipuum sacramentum* between warriors and chief, as they sacrifice themselves for the others' life, spoils, and glory (*Germania* 14.1)—a free and 'unviolable' (*unverbrüchlich*) relation in Hegel's paraphrase. If these are indeed loose borrowings from Tacitus' *Germania*, Hegel joins Montesquieu, Herder, Gibbon, Fichte, F.L. Jahn, and others who took their primary conception of 'the German' from Tacitus' 'noble savages': Krebs 2011: 129–52, Todd 2004: 242–5. On Germanic 'heart' (absent from the 'Romanic' nations), see e.g. LH 420–2. Tacitus' Germans: LH 341–2, 347.

hallowed formulas and rites. Such ritualism binds action but leaves the mind and will unaffected, and so in practice Roman priests often interpret religious phenomena with a view to subjective advantage—a utilitarian spirit that held sway from the early patricians, who treated the city's *sacra* as their own private property, down to Trinitarian debates of Roman Byzantium that (Hegel deduces) were political rivalries in theological disguise. Roman piety is thus a masked egoism, and Roman *religio* satisfies utilitarian minds, but not true spiritual need. Nevertheless, the rift between external ritual and inner self opens up an external, public sphere—a sphere where formal religion was first suborned to sanctify private aims, but later satirized and ultimately dismissed from it as irrelevant.¹¹¹ Furthermore, and less obviously, the *numen* hidden in external phenomena had its subjective counterpart in the heart, hidden initially even from the worshipper himself: an incipient sense of the 'bare subjectivity of conscience'.¹¹² Both correlatives—the politico-religious ritual and the sovereign will, the external formalism and the internal conscience—would be developed through Roman history, by its imperial 'theogony' and by its progressive realization (through philosophical and Christian interiority) of the absolute reality of Spirit. In a phrase, Hegel's Roman world foreshadows the correlatives of *imperium* and *sacerdotium*, which underlie much medieval history: contests between popes and emperors, the Gelasian doctrine of 'two swords', controversies over investiture of bishops, ecclesiastical courts, Church property, and so forth.¹¹³

In Hegel's narrative, the dichotomy of inner conscience and external state power informs the history of the *Germanic* world, even up to the Reformation. This purported to reunite the two extremes by abolishing a separate sacred sphere, and infusing the secular with holy intensity: now God is not summoned from beyond by a separate priesthood and the pageantry of the Mass, but rises in the certainty of the heart and conscience; now religious and contemplative life are no more worthy than secular and practical vocations; now kings and potentates are directly responsible to God for their commission, without mediation of archbishop or pope. Much of this filters into Hegel's vision, even though he does not go so far as to anathematize 'harlot' Rome or directly link Catholic sacramentalism with

¹¹¹ See LH 294–5 for the process that eventually left the Roman secular realm 'entirely free', due to the growing power of 'arbitrary choice' (*Willkür*), among both supporters and scorers of traditional religious formalism.

¹¹² LH 290.

¹¹³ *Imperium–sacerdotium*: e.g. LH 342–4, 378–80, LP 3.157–8.

ancient Roman ritualism.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, in the *longue durée* of his Rome, Roman paganism and its Catholic 'truth' become interrelated, intermediate stages in man's progression to the modern conviction of immanent divinity. That history would effectively end with Luther's reforms, and Hegel's rectoral address on the 300th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession praises Lutheranism as the true Christianity, at once consonant with the modern spirit and a restoration of the 'true meaning of [especially Greek?] antiquity', promoting familial love, property, work, individual initiative, egalitarianism, patriotism, and the free cultivation of the arts and sciences—over against Catholicism's benighted cults of celibacy, poverty, otherworldly holiness, and blind obedience to a tyrannical, hypocritical clergy.¹¹⁵

This is clichéd propaganda, even by the standards of 1820s Berlin. Nevertheless, and to be charitable, its most distant origins offer the elements of an unusual explanation of modern secularism. Where the standard account fastens upon Jesus' injunction 'to give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's',¹¹⁶ Hegel's system points also to the *Roman* dichotomy of the profane and sacred, of the forceful state and the will's inner sanctum—a distant precedent for the later dualisms of world and conscience, *imperium* and *sacerdotium* that Lutheran culture would claim to reconcile, as it hallows all secular activity (including the 'ritual' of the university lecture) as potential forms of *Gottesdienst*.¹¹⁷

4.5. A Profane Prophet: 'I say unto you, "You must become God"'

Despite Hegel's zeal to present himself as an orthodox Lutheran, and to develop the definitive theory of Christian, Roman, and Greek religions, a fundamental ambiguity lurks in his understanding of all of them. Into

¹¹⁴ An example of the latter is Conyers Middleton's *A Letter from Rome, Shewing an Exact Conformity between Popery and Paganism; Or, The Religion of the Present Romans derived from that of their Heathen Ancestors* (1729): Phillips traces such critiques back to Luther himself (2007: 18). On the 'Roman monster' of Protestant polemic, see Buck 2014. Hegel traces Catholic formalism back to Jewish legalism also (Stepelevich 1992: 683–5). Pite 2012: 1–3 surveys the common 'Romantic' association of ancient Rome with the Catholic Church.

¹¹⁵ Pinkard 2000: 627–31 summarizes Hegel's rectoral address ('true meaning': 629).

¹¹⁶ Mark 12:17, Matthew 22:21: one source for Augustine's juxtaposition of the 'city of man' and 'city of God'.

¹¹⁷ 'Ethical life is the most genuine *cultus*': LR 1.446 (1827). 'Philosophy [too] is a continual *cultus*: LR 1.446 (1827).

each (as I have highlighted), he insinuates his own conception of absolute self-mediation—or, more precisely, his adaptation of Aristotle's definition of God as Thought Thinking Thought. The 'god of the philosophers' becomes the true concept of God which must particularize itself through the course of religious evolution. From Chinese Tian (Sky) and the Hebrews' Lord to the Egyptians' animal-human gods, the Greeks' anthropomorphic powers, Rome's purposive *numina* and divine emperors, and down to the fully historical person of Christ, the divine accommodations become increasingly human until they reach their limit (to borrow a phrase from calculus) in the Incarnation. This central religious event and notion brings together two movements:

The first side is the divine becoming human (substance divests or empties itself of itself and becomes self-consciousness); the second is the human becoming divine (self-consciousness divests itself of itself and makes itself into a universal self). There is a divestment of the divine and an exaltation of the human such that the two become one: here Hegel has adopted the classic Lutheran doctrine of the two states of Christ (humiliation and exaltation), but he probes its meaning with astonishing insight.

(Hodgson 2005: 37)

What is astonishing is not so much Hegel's insight, as the sleight of hand by which he transforms an ancient tradition into something richly modern and strange. The key ancient text is the Patristic statement that 'God became man, so that man may become God' (*factus est Deus homo ut homo fieret Deus*). This has been taken as 'a sort of summary of Christian belief'¹¹⁸ but while the first clause has sparked centuries of Christological controversy, the second has not conventionally been construed as proclaiming man's apotheosis. Imitating Christ, humans are called to become Christ-like and to realize themselves in the likeness and image of God: but the likeness is always imperfect, tarnished by sin. More concisely, *incarnation* (God becoming man) does not guarantee *apotheosis* (man becoming God). So too with the other key ancient text for the theology of Christian *theōsis*. The Platonic injunction to 'become like God as much as possible' also asserts man's divine vocation—again not to be perfected in this life.¹¹⁹ But Hegel, ever impatient

¹¹⁸ Barron, 2011: 2–3. The wording as quoted is attributed to Augustine (*Sermons* 128).

¹¹⁹ *Theaetetus* 176a8–b3; cf. *Timaeus* 90a–d, *Epinomis* 988a with Merki 1952, Passmore 1970, Sedley 1997, Sedley 1999, Dombrowski 2005: 95–112.

with mere regulative ideals, would make the Incarnation a constitutive ideal of spiritual beings. All historical gods, therefore, are forms of divine embodiment, prefigurations of the Incarnation. All human beings elevate themselves to some degree to Spirit, and modern man most of all, with his political 'utopia', philosophy of art, Lutheran faith, and absolute idealism. For to know God as the Self-Thinking Thought that evolves into thinking human subjectivity is to realize in oneself one's union with God. To know God is tantamount to becoming God: *humanus ist der Heilige*, as Hegel's histories of art and religion both strongly push. Let me state this dynamic far more brusquely than Hegel cares to: one not only can, and should, know God—one must *become* God.¹²⁰ There is in Hegel's theology (I suggest) a veiled exhortation to apotheosis. This, indeed, is only consistent with his absolute monism of knowing and being.¹²¹

This tendency to apotheosize man would gain increasing force in nineteenth-century rhetoric, but for Hegel the pivotal moments are in antiquity. The dynamism of the French and Industrial Revolutions sharpened a fascinated belief in human power: Goethe's Faust, Shelley's Prometheus, Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, Solov'yov's man-god, down to Harari's *Homo Deus* are variations on the theme that human beings have liberated themselves from the heteronomy of nature and tradition, and can now pursue their own will with its seemingly limitless possibilities.¹²² For Hegel, Spirit's self-realization is a process synonymous with human history, and in this story of progressive apotheosis, the Greek anthropomorphic gods and Roman *numina* play pivotal roles, breaking with the Orient's abstractions and nature worship, pervading the conception and cult of the divine

¹²⁰ See e.g. *LP* 3.5–6 ('Man makes himself divine'). *Humanus ist der Heilige*: *LA* 1.607.

¹²¹ Hegel frequently inveighs against (Enlightenment) scepticism about the limits of human understanding: to say that God cannot be known is a false humility, indeed a 'sin against the holy Ghost' (*LP* 2.73), for it reverts to pre-Christian and pre-Platonic notions of a *jealous* deity that suffers itself not to be known (e.g. *EM* §564, *LR* 1.86–8, 104 (Ms)). The true infinite, on the contrary, includes the finite, and the knowledge that God imparts (e.g. through history) ought to be cultivated self-consciously by each individual. Each 'ought' must be capable of actual realization, and concrete knowledge brings an 'identity' between knowing self and known other. Again, Kantian dislike of 'heteronomous' religions (e.g. Judaism, Islam, hierarchical Catholicism), and eagerness to locate the divine within (human) reason *alone* pervades Hegel's thought from an early date. The writer of 'The Oldest System Programme', for example, would welcome 'through reason itself the overthrow of all superstition, and the persecution of the priesthood, which recently pretends to reason. Then comes absolute freedom of all spirits, which carry the intellectual world in themselves, and which may not seek God or immortality *outside themselves*' (in Beiser 1996: 4).

¹²² Hegel is a major figure in what R.C. Tucker calls the 'Faust theme' (2017: 31–56): 'the centuries-old ruling conception of an unbridgeable chasm of kind between the human and the divine gave way to the conception of a surmountable difference of degree'.

with a resolute humanism, and so offering divine accommodations that are ever truer to the divine itself, preparing mankind for the Incarnation and the spiritual elevation of mankind—to itself. God became man in the Roman world, and all subsequent history is but the slow working out of the consequences, as man slowly elevates himself to knowing consciousness of the divinity that he already is.

This evolutionary perspective may help one to gain a better handle on Hegel both as student of antiquity and as Christian theologian. Hegelian scholars point to the centrality of religion in his system, but the almost exclusive focus on his views of Christianity and Judaism (and, to a lesser extent, Islam and Buddhism) has yielded multifarious, even incompatible conclusions: Hegel is judged to be an orthodox believer—and a heterodox one; a Protestant philosopher, even the Aquinas of Lutheranism—and an ecumenical eclectic; the first Christian thinker—and the last; the finest Christian theologian—and a subtle impostor, humanist, gnostic, hermeticist, pantheist, atheist.¹²³ These controversies cannot be adjudicated here. But if one were to reach for a convenient label for Hegel's ambiguous blend of apologetics and historicism, might one venture to name him a modern Euhemerist? Euhemerus is said to have rationalized the gods of polytheism as products of historical distortion: great humans were magnified in their heirs' memories so as to be eventually thought gods. The approach was favoured by Church Fathers eager to debunk the pagan deities, even as they struggled with a residual sense of their divine potency. A similar ambiguity is evident in Hegel. His philosophical apologetics elevates Christianity as the sole 'religion of truth', but in a more sociological vein he historicizes that truth by juxtaposing it with 'finite' religions and making Greek and Roman anthropocentric religions (with Judaism) *the* 'preparation for the Gospel'. On the one hand, the ancient gods are debunked as all-too-human—

¹²³ Centrality of religion: Hegel 'had no deeper and more abiding interest' (Hodgson 2005: 22). Heterodox: O'Regan 1994; cf. W.J. Desmond 2003 (Hegel merely 'orbits' the essential religious intuition of God's real transcendence (3)). First self-styled Protestant philosopher: M. Westphal 1992: 149. Lutheran Aquinas: Barth 1969. 'Eclectic': Hodgson 2005: 192–3. 'Perhaps...the first genuinely' Christian philosopher: Houlgate 2005: 272. 'Last Christian philosopher' (in the fullest sense): Löwith 1950: 62; Küng's thinking about a 'future Christology' is in constant debate with Hegel (1987). Christian theologian: Kainz 1996: 149–50 ('speculative and patristic, rather than biblical or "systematic"'); cf. Burbidge 1992: 141–53. Christian humanist: Gascoigne 1985. Gnostic: Voegelin 1968. Hermeticist: Magee 2001. Atheist: Bruno Bauer (1989 [1841]), Solomon 1983: 582. Initiator of 'a distinctively modern—liberal and post-Enlightenment—religious project': Speight 2008: 117; cf. Hodgson 2005: 13. 'Neither an apologist nor a debunker', Crites's Hegel 'cannot be cut to the Procrustean bed of any conventional labels' (1998: xvii).

powerful projections and mirror-images of their people's spirit. Yet, as a means by which a people mediates with itself, those gods are recognized by longer philosophical *Erinnerung* as imperfect forms of divine self-thinking, and are therefore redeemed once more as *gods*—refractions of the true God. True once, obsolete now, and yet though outmoded, still justified as modes of divine accommodation, needful steps in man's self-realization, Hegel's ancient divinities are a complex union of the logical Concept, human actions, and their 'apotheosis' in the purifying 'memory' of retrospective thought. Perhaps no one label can cover all the elements of Hegel's synthesis, but 'Euhemerist' may not be wholly amiss. Certainly Euhemerists tend to reduce human and divine to a single, *temporal* dimension. So too with Hegel's more complex *theōsis*, if it does indeed push for the wholly *immanent* transfiguration of the human spirit to Spirit.

If by *thinking* man identifies with the God that he is and always was, then religious modes of thinking and being may well have an uncertain future. Hegel does not pronounce the 'end of religion', and he rules it out—wary of the sceptical tendencies of the age, respectful of the witness of simple piety, aware that human beings need 'picture-thought' (*Vorstellung*).¹²⁴ Yet the limitations he finds in art seem directly applicable to religion also, if it is true that they both share philosophy's 'divine' content, but lack its superior, rational form. If so, the progress of Absolute Spirit would surely see the mergence of old religious picture-thinking into the necessary conceptions of philosophy. Rosenkranz does not shrink from making the idea explicit:

The truth should present itself to us in religion, of course, but for our culture faith is altogether a thing of the past; Reason, with its demand that we should not believe, but know what the truth is, has grown strong, that we should not merely have intuitive consciousness of the truth, but should comprehend it.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ PS §§7–8 mocks atheistic materialists, 'ready like worms to content themselves with dirt and water'; in the desert of such 'enlightenment', people thirst—even for a thimbleful of Romantic sentimentality; cf. Hinchman 1984: 122–55, Outram 1995: 114–19. Hegel endorses the quasi-Platonic view that religion is 'for everyone', philosophy for the elite few (e.g. LR 1.80 (1827), 3.357–8 (1831), and in expressions to Victor Cousin that religion 'is absolutely indispensable... [and] represents the permanent needs of mankind' (Butler and Seiler 1984: 663–4)). That philosophy expresses the same content as religion, but in superior form, is likened in *EL* to the Homeric conceit that some things have two names, a divine and a human (2nd Preface).

¹²⁵ Cited in *EL*, xv. Outmoded religious forms: e.g. LP 3.8–9. On Hegel's equivocalities regarding the end of religion, see W.J. Desmond 2003: 187–208.

Such thoughts were taken much further by Left Hegelians, who found in Hegel the makings of an atheistic social scientist.¹²⁶ Paradoxically, in his zeal to honour God with the 'metaphysical compliment' of being truly infinite, encompassing all reality, and therefore being present in man's heart and mind as its own knowable essence—Hegel pushes his Christian apologetics so far that it spawns its opposite. Exposing the myth of divine transcendence as a premodern self-deception, Hegelian man realizes that the proper object of worship is not God so much as man-become-God. Mankind creates all gods out of its own (Greek) imagination, (Roman) purposiveness, and (modern) reason; all these evolutions further man's struggle to become the final, unlimited, absolute Mind. If this interpretation is not too strongly drawn, then how far is Hegel's complex 'Euhemerism' from Paul. That Greek-speaking Roman citizen and one-time Pharisee also relates the great religious cultures of antiquity, but emphasizes proper differences more, and refuses to submit the mystery of God to the dominion of human thinking:

For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ On Left Hegelian interpretations, see e.g. Toews 1982, Knowles 2002: 19 ('Demystifying Hegel, these writers concluded that the subject of history was not spirit, but man'), and Gascoigne 1985.

¹²⁷ 1 Corinthians 22–3 (KJV).

5

Philosophy

5.1. Concepts of Philosophy

In an age that remembers and compares all, philosophy risks dissolving into a medley of conflicting, competing, or partially overlapping perspectives. Before a proliferating plethora of -isms, daunted by so many abstractions, the mind may recoil into the conviction, even certainty that there is no certainty. If this sceptical impulse seems fatal to philosophy, it is doubly so for the history of philosophy, which to an age of doubt may seem only an idle ‘meditation on death’, as the antiquarian moves busily among a ‘gallery’ of silent, lifeless busts.¹ From Hegel’s perspective, philosophy necessarily includes, and indeed *is*, a sceptical meditation on its own past: ‘The study of the history of philosophy is the study of philosophy itself’.² But if it is dialectical and methodical, a history of thought will not end in doubt, knowing ignorance, or the mere desire for wisdom. Knowledge of its past will not humble philosophy and force it to renounce its ambitions, as if were a mere desire for wisdom, or a critical tool of reasoning, or handmaiden of theology or of art or science or the state, or a propaedeutic to anything beyond itself. A true history will rather reveal philosophy as *the* end in itself, the definitive *Wissenschaft*: self-conscious, pre-suppositionless knowledge of the Absolute, in all its incarnations, is the settled possession of ‘the philosopher’.³ The modern idealist is wise to the inner unity of all things, including all the variations of philosophy not excepting scepticism: all are needful

¹ ‘Gallery of heroes of thought’: *LP* 1.1; cf. 1.39 (‘temple of Memory’) and Reale (1987: xxii). Most histories of philosophy Hegel judges to be doxographies, ‘disarranged collections of opinions’ (*LP* 1.31).

² *LP* 1.30.

³ Philosophy is not love of wisdom, but ‘actual knowledge’: *PS* §3 (Miller); cf. Magee 2001: 1. Hegel is well aware of the changing connotations of the word ‘philosopher’ (‘There was a time when a man who did not believe in spectres or in the devil was called a philosopher’: *LP* 1.57). When his Pythagoras coins *philosophos* as his self-description (1.199), he does so with Hegelian science in the offing—‘to know this one Truth as the immediate source from which all else proceeds’ (1.19–20).

parts 'in making up the calm existence' of the philosophical mind when it has become worthy of itself.⁴

This concept of philosophy as the self-conscious knowledge of the Absolute is developed first in Hegel's logic, and his logic will be an ontological one that allegedly provides the key to all histories—most especially the history of philosophy. Here Hegel's logical work is both revolutionary and rooted in the ancient past. Kant had echoed the *sensus communis* when he treated Aristotelian logic as a completed science, incapable of extension or substantial improvement. For Hegel, by contrast, traditional logic had only collected together so many forms of judgment and syllogism and dogmatically asserted them as definitive: a merely 'empirical' logic, indeed a paradoxically '*irrational* cognition of the *rational*'.⁵ This logic made little fundamental progress since Aristotle not because he had perfected it, but because it could be given definitive, systematic form only at the end of the history of philosophy.⁶ Thus, when the headmaster of the Nürnberg Gymnasium set out to articulate that form in his *Science of Logic*, he did not lay stress on his own supreme ability. It was rather the spirit of the age that made it now possible for someone to articulate a logic at once self-grounded, conceptually complete, and ontologically all-embracing. Here would be gathered together Pythagorean opposites, Platonic 'greatest kinds', Aristotelian and Kantian categories, tables of judgment and valid syllogisms—indeed, *all* the basic 'thought-determinations' that had been discovered hitherto. By one estimate, Hegel's *SL* enfolds into itself some seventy-nine basic categories or 'thought-determinations'.⁷

This work of unification is not one of mere aggregation, and Hegel offers a different image for his logical project: not to build 'a new city in a wasteland' but 'to remodel an ancient city, solidly built, and maintained in continuous possession and occupation'.⁸ More precisely, the city is not to be just remodelled: the old stones must be melded together so that the whole 'city' will be sculpted, as it were, out of a single block. Thus Hegel's every thought-determination will be fused more fully than the contents of the Neoplatonic *kosmos noëtos*. From 'Being' to the 'Idea', each thought-

⁴ Cf. Wordsworth, *Prelude* 1.344–50.

⁵ Stace §313; cf. §322.

⁶ *EL* §20A.

⁷ Carlson counts each triad (e.g. Being, non-Being, Becoming) as one thought-determination (2007: 4). Hegel's term 'thought-determinations' (*Denkbestimmung*) reflects the categories' double nature as pure concepts ('thought') and as transcendental structures 'determining' objective phenomena: in them, 'the antithesis between subjective and objective (in its usual meaning) disappears. This meaning of thinking and of its determinations is more precisely expressed by the Ancients when they say that *nous* governs the world' (*EL* §24A1).

⁸ *SL*, Foreword (II.575, tr. Miller); cf. *EL* §10.

determination becomes both premise for and deductive consequence of all the others: given a sequence of logical concepts $\{C_k: 1 \leq k \leq 79\}$, *SL* purports to demonstrate necessarily that $C_1 \rightarrow C_2 \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow C_{79} \rightarrow C_1$, where each C_{k+1} explicates the content of C_k in different form. Thus, superficially, the sequence $\{C_k\}$ forms a plurality of different concepts, but, more profoundly, it expresses the *single* Concept in its different guises: each C_k is unique in connotation or intension, but 'identical' in denotation.⁹ Thus, each thought-determination implicitly contains all others and the whole, and could serve as the starting-point from which to 'derive' the others: one could (arguably) enter into this closed circle at any point. The *SL* makes their deeper unity explicit, and while most minds will trace this unity step-by-step, stumbling after Hegel's lead and only dimly grasping the identity of, say, C_1 (Being) and C_{79} (Absolute Idea), this *dianoetic* approach of the Understanding prepares for and is consummated in an instantaneous, *noetic* and properly rational grasp of the argument as a whole.¹⁰ Here the *dianoetic* reading parallels the historical development of thought itself, which proceeds by small insights, until at last the educated modern mind can take in the whole movement in a single glance, overleaping the whole trajectory with 'seven-league boots', and *noetically* grasping the whole sequence, $\{C_k\}$, at once. The mediated immediacy of this knowing becomes in Hegel's shorthand *the* Concept, and his 'circular epistemology' again ensures that the whole is known only through its parts, and vice versa.

In the line of deduction from Being to the Idea, *SL* orders the various determinations into three groups: those of Being (*Sein*), Essence (*Wesen*), and the Concept (*Begriff*).¹¹ The categories of *universal* Being (quality,

⁹ Intension/extension distinction: Hartnack 1998: 12–14. Hegel approves of Lagrange's efforts to bring to calculus 'the rigor of the proofs of the ancients' (*SL* 222), and in this spirit my circular formula $C_1 \rightarrow C_2 \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow C_n \rightarrow C_1$ draws on analytic symbolism developed by Cauchy and Bolzano (near contemporaries of Hegel), and later by Weierstrass, to more neatly capture *SL*'s paradoxical combination of opposition and continuity, the identity-in-difference of the Hegelian *Wechselerweis* in which 'we can begin from any proposition and return to it because all propositions are inter-connected' (Beiser 2003: 125).

¹⁰ For the sense that *SL*'s section divisions are for convenience only, and that logical knowledge occurs at the level of timeless *nous*, see *SL* 32–7, Mure 1950: 20, 44, and Speight 2008: 60.

¹¹ There are ancient precedents for these three main divisions: (1) 'Being' is the Eleatic category; (2) Hegel's pun on *Wesen* as that which 'has been' (*gewesen*) recalls Aristotle's phrase for essence as $\tauὸ τί ἦν εἶναι$ which involves an imperfect form of 'to be' ($\eta\iota\nu$; cf. Mure 1950: 35, 80); while (3) *Begriff*, translated as 'Notion', better as 'Concept' (the root meaning of *con-cipere* (*cipio*), like that of *Begreifen*, is 'grasp'), but also sometimes as the Greek *Logos*, for Hegel can speak of his logical *Begriff* as the 'thought of God' before the actual appearance of nature: e.g. *PN* 1:247A; cf. Gans' Preface to *LH* (1837), in Hoffheimer 1995: 102 ('the Logos of History... Logos of Nature, of the Soul, of Law, of Art'); Speight 2008: 53 and Magee 2001: 151.

quantity, measure) are basically the categories of immediate experience; the categories of particular Essence (ground of existence, appearance, actuality) are those structuring *particular* objects of scientific *Verstand*; while moments of the Concept (subjectivity, objectivity, Absolute Idea) include the more traditional material of terms, judgments, and syllogisms on the 'way up' to the Idea, which fully articulates what was germinating in the concept of Being. In sum, Being is Idea, and all that is can only be grasped in terms of the thought-determinations that make up the Absolute Idea. The 'Being' and 'Idea' that bookend this complex argument suggest that the logic of Hegelian idealism is not a purely formal one, and that its categories are at the centre of concrete knowledge: in his own terms, the thesis of *SL* is the identity of being and thought.

This notion of an 'ontological logic' has been a stumbling block and foolishness for some, scandalized by Hegel's seemingly cavalier disregard for the orthodox view of logic as a purely formal discipline. For such doubters, Hegel gives a clear and emphatic forewarning: logic's concepts will seem arid and abstractly *a priori* to the immature, but are in fact silently expressive of all the colour and movement of nature and history.

One, many, like, unlike, more or less, are trivial, empty, dry moments; that there should be contained in them absolute essence, the riches and the organization of the natural, as of the spiritual world, does not seem possible to him who, accustomed to ordinary ideas, has not gone back from sensuous existence into thought. It does not seem to such a one that God is, in a speculative sense, expressed thereby—that what is most sublime can be put in these common words, what is deepest, in what is so well known, self-evident and open, and what is richest, in the poverty of these abstractions.¹²

Somewhat more obvious is how the categories of Essence (e.g. thing and properties, force and expression, possibility and actuality, substance and accident, cause and effect, reciprocity) rework the Kantian categories, themselves transcendental conditions and 'logical' summaries of Newtonian mechanics. More obvious still is how Hegel seeks to condense fundamental perspectives of natural sciences into categories such as quantity, measure, mechanism, chemism, teleology, cognition, and life. In all, his logic purports

¹² *LP* 1.219–20; cf. *EL*: xv–xvi (1804 Jena lecture), *SL* 36–7.

to be both a self-contained circle of 'pure' concepts, *and* a system that prefigures or sums up the structures of the existent. This prefiguration operates most broadly when the logical triad Being–Essence–Concept anticipates the *EPS* trinity of Logic–Nature–Spirit; and very specifically, as when the first logical triad (Being–Nothing–Becoming) is mirrored in the first natural one (space–time–motion).¹³ The multiple roles that logic plays in Hegel's system is well summarized by Lobkowitz:

In the concluding paragraphs (575–577) of the *Enzyklopaedie*, Hegel briefly discusses the relationship between logic, philosophy of nature, and philosophy of mind. He submits three alternatives, each of which he considers correct in a way; but only the third expresses the whole truth. According to the first, logic becomes nature and nature becomes mind. According to the second, nature has a logical structure and mind is its reflection. According to the third, 'Reason which knows itself' posits mind as its subjective activity and nature as its objectivity. The first sequence sees logic as God, nature as His creation, and mind as nature's conscious return to God; the second views nature as the basic reality, logic as its structure, and mind as its self-reflection. Finally, according to the third view, philosophy is the primary reality, and both logic and nature are its 'manifestations'.¹⁴

These three alternatives allow for different interpretative approaches to Hegel's system. Lobkowitz's second perspective is closest to empiricists' 'common sense' as well as Kant's critical outlook. Accepting the empirical validity of arithmetic, Euclidean geometry, and Newtonian physics (*pace* Hume), Kant sought to articulate their inner intelligibility: he took the Aristotelian table of judgments as his 'clue' for the synthetic *a priori* categories that structure the thing-in-itself's *data* into the organized phenomena of experience. Hegel went even further as he attempted to unify Kant's categories (among others) into a single Concept that would be both an *a priori* system of 'pure reason' and an articulation of the *synthetic a priori* structure of experience. In effect, Hegel goes further than Kant in seeking to logicize (and not, with Novalis, merely mathematicize) existing knowledge. Here his monism would make the Concept the infinite origin of *both* the form and matter of what is. This, however, is more redolent of the

¹³ *EL* §254ff with Höhle 1986.

¹⁴ Lobkowitz 1989: 46 n.33.

first alternative: the logical universals of the Concept (like the Father before Creation) prefigure Nature and Spirit; logical thought-determinations are the abstract, arid schemata for possible experience; or, again, logic is 'the realm of shadows, the world of simple essentialities'.¹⁵ But for Hegel, essences must manifest themselves: shadows foreshadow the shapes of things to come; or in Aristotelian terms, logical *universalia* must be instantiated *in rebus*, e.g. in the actualities of Nature and Spirit.¹⁶ And yet this leads on to Lobkowicz's third alternative if it is true that shadows are understood, Platonic-wise, only on the basis of the substantial realities that cast them. Only with the modern development of the natural and human sciences can their logical 'shadows' be fully systematized in a work like *SL*; only then can Mind, made self-aware by the long study of nature and its own intellectual history, posit both as its particularizations. This third alternative can be likened to Proclean notions of 'procession' and 'return': *Geist* is the One reality, that must 'emanate', proceed, unfold, or evolve out of itself all entities as more diffuse reflections of itself, and through their immanent self-development 'return' to itself, now conscious of itself as the immanent being of all becoming. The three alternatives may thus be associated with different thinkers, but it is to Aristotle's God that Hegel makes most appeal: the divine Idea is Aristotle's Self-Thinking Thought, whose self-contemplation 'creates' logical essences and natural actualities as its inner incarnations.

In light of these considerations, the question whether Hegel remains a 'Kantian' or returns to pre-critical 'metaphysics' seems rather clumsy. Hegel makes no secret that his logic would revive the *old* metaphysics in *new* form: the old Aristotelian substance-metaphysics has been 'extirpated root and branch', yet the new speculative logic ('the system of pure reason') 'coincides with metaphysics, with the science of *things* grasped in *thoughts* that used to be taken to express the *essentialities* of *things*'.¹⁷ Better to take him as a

¹⁵ Father before Creation: *SL* 29 (Hegel goes on immediately to reference Anaxagoras' *Nous*); cf. *EM* §§565–9. 'Realm of shadows': *SL* 37, cf. *EL* §163A.

¹⁶ In arguing that logic's timeless determinations are yet manifested successively in time, Hegel is one of the first to suggest that even logic has its external history. Not surprisingly then, an early history of logic was by the Hegelian Carl von Prantl: *Geschichte der Logik im Abendland* (1855–70). Wholly Hegelian in spirit is Dumitriu: 'Logic is the whole of its own becoming, the integral summation of all moments of its history. Logic is its history and the history of logic is logic itself' (1977: I.ix).

¹⁷ *EL* §24. 'The system of pure reason': *SL* 29—gesturing towards Kant's definition of metaphysics as 'the system of pure reason, that is, the science which exhibits in systematic connection the whole body (true as well as illusory) of philosophical knowledge arising out of pure reason' (1991b: A841/B869). Given this, 'non-metaphysical' readings of Hegel's *SL* (e.g.

Janus-figure, straddling the threshold of ancient and more modern perspectives: from different angles, he is an Aristotelian, Neoplatonist, Kantian, as well as a process thinker.¹⁸ No one label will suffice.

Nevertheless, ancient philosophy is particularly salient for Hegel. He is first and foremost an Eleatic, for whom the ultimate 'identity' of being and thinking is the fundamental truth. Again, as a neo-Aristotelian, his divine Idea thinks itself and so realizes itself in concepts, nature, soul, mind: the true world-making. Or again, one finds in Hegel's enthusiasms for 'speculative' flight something of the Platonic *Schwärmerei* that worried Kant: for Hegel to *think* is to elevate one's small self into the universal Mind, to replace subjective points-of-view with objective categories, and to purge one's mind of sensuous images and so enter into a purity of vision that is at once religious and scientific. It is to rise into consciousness of the unity of subject and object, of *nous* and *noëta*, in the unconstrained light of the single Idea, beyond hypothesis or presupposition.¹⁹ All this Hegel would make respectably 'scientific', but in his history of philosophy (and elsewhere) he refuses to take Kant's critical philosophy as the beginning of insight. On the contrary, he goes back to the earliest Greek thinkers for the first categories, and can loudly praise the ancients as often more insightful (i.e. more Hegelian) than their modern heirs.

Whether one labels Hegel a 'modern' or 'ancient' thinker, his ontological logic and reflections on the concept of philosophy ensure that timeless insight and historical erudition both play essential parts in his history of philosophy. On the one hand, *SL* is the key to this history. Articulating philosophy's universal conception (the unity of thought and being), it gives the criterion for selecting, interpreting, and judging past philosophies *as* philosophy. Thinking and writing philosophy's history are therefore not *primarily* a matter of scholarship: only the logician can recognize the laws of thought immanent in a chaos of data that bewilder mere scholars.²⁰ On the other hand, despite many testy put-downs of Brucker, Tennemann, and

Longuenesse 2007) are less insightful than those that recall the metaphysical kernel of all Hegel's mature thought (e.g. Burbidge 1992, 2006, Thompson 2018).

¹⁸ Hermeticist: Magee 2001. Process thinking: Becoming is the first concrete *Denkbestimmung* (EL §88A5); cf. Lucas 2000.

¹⁹ On Kant's distrust of Plato as the 'father of every *Schwärmerei* in philosophy', and Hegel's disagreement, see Muratori 2016: 182–4. 'Hyperouranian *topos*': Plato *Phaedrus* 247c3–e2. Insight 'beyond hypothesis': *Republic* 511b3–c2, Plotinus 6.7.35–6.

²⁰ *LP* 1.29–31.

Tiedemann, Hegel does not dismiss scholarship.²¹ Far from it: the universal is grasped only through its particulars, each historical period must be understood in its own terms, and so the complete historian of philosophy will immerse himself in past cultures, aware that it is through the particularities of language, customs, and beliefs that philosophy evolves as the highest expression of a people's 'spirit'. Here Hegel proposes that each stage of philosophical development explores a certain logical principle, and that therefore the temporal series of philosophers mirrors or 'corresponds' to the logical series of 'pure' thought-determinations.²² Namely, the timeless unfolding of the Concept prefigures the temporal evolution of philosophy. It is by appealing to a principle of evolution that Hegel can organize his vast erudition into a single diachronic narrative. Certainly, the Hegelian historian must perform the difficult double act of submitting to the past, and judging it, and in this his *Lectures on Philosophy* may stand up well to their own internal critique. Stinting neither scholarship nor fundamental insight, they move beyond antiquarian detail to organize a multiplicity into a unified, narrative *history*; and it is a history of *philosophy* as it rethinks predecessors both in their own terms and in relation to 'the truth' more

²¹ Hegel's own scholarly appendix for his 'Sources of the History of Philosophy' (1.110–14) is supplemented by the 'Bibliography of Hegel's Sources for Greek Philosophy' in Brown's edition (2006: 355–65), but even this does not quite exhaust the references in Haldane's edition. One of Hegel's few obvious omissions here is Lucretius, though he owned Gifanio's 1566 version (Brown 2006: 360). On the other hand, Hegel shows his versatility by critiquing compilations of fragments of Heraclitus (by Stephanus, Schleiermacher, Kreuzer: *LP* 1.280–1) and Empedocles (Sturz, Peyron: *LP* 1.310–11), and by synthesizing references to editions as recent as Bekker's *Republic*, *Timaeus*, and *Meno*, or Orelli's *Herculaneum papyrus of Epicurus* (1818)—or as old as Casaubon's *Athenaeus* (1597): a reminder that in his Tübingen days, he had to study Aristotle 'with an almost unreadable ancient edition (the Basle edition of 1531 or possibly 1550) without an accompanying Latin translation' (Horst 2000: 12; cf. Ferrarin 2004: 246 on his lecturing from Erasmus's version of *De Anima*). In his 'Sources', he chiefly puts predecessors in their place: Brucker's *Historia Critica Philosophiae* (1742–4), the major source for Diderot's *Encyclopédie* article on Greek philosophy; Tennemann's *Geschichte der Philosophie* (1798–1819); and Tiedemann's *Geist der spekulativen Philosophie* (1791–7)—despite his frequent use of them (Brown's critical edition is here most helpful). Other scholars elicit interest (Brandis, Stahr, Steinhart) and even praise: Böckh's 1807 'On the Constitution of the World-Soul in the *Timaeus* of Plato' is 'most thorough' (2.81), Ritter's 1821 *Geschichte der Ionischen Philosophie* 'carefully written' (1.43).

²² Hegel adduces mainly ancient examples for the 'correspondence principle' (*EL* §86): categories of Being, Becoming, individuality (*Fürsichsein*), and quantity are linked with Parmenides (*EL* §86 A2), Heraclitus (*EL* §88A), ancient atomism (*SL* 134, *EL* §98), and Pythagoreanism (*EL* §104 A3), respectively. Beyond these examples, however, the parallelism between logic and philosophical history remains something of an ideal *desideratum*, and Hegel does not pedantically insist on one-to-one correspondences throughout (*LP* 1.29–30; cf. *PR* §§3, 32); cf. Beiser, *LP*: I.xxi–xxv, Nuzzo 2003: 26–31.

deeply operative through the letter and *ipsissima verba* of the philosophers studied.

Armed with his erudition and ontological logic, Hegel builds his *LP* on several interrelated theses. First, all past philosophies (like logical thought-determinations) are fundamentally one: 'every philosophy is essentially idealism or at least has idealism for its principle'.²³ Second, the historicist thesis: because 'philosophy is its own time comprehended in thoughts',²⁴ each thinker will be shaped by the spirit of his times to express that spirit in the most abstract terms; alternatively, each philosopher is a person of deep *Bildung*, who raises his whole culture to the highest pitch of abstract expression.²⁵ These two principles are in tension, but are reconciled in a third. Cultural memory is cumulative, nothing essential is lost, and what comes later in a sequence will embrace all its predecessors. With this principle of evolutionary accumulation, Hegel effectively revisits the Platonic conceit of a 'golden chain' or apostolic succession of true philosophers: 'since Philosophy in its ultimate essence is one and the same, every succeeding philosopher will and must take up into his own, all philosophies that went before, and what falls specially to him is their further development'.²⁶ Thus while each thinker is determined by his specific culture (or national 'spirit'), he also 'belongs to the one universal Mind which is his substance and his own existence'. Hence there is no final distinction between the historical variety and inner logical unity of all philosophies: 'every philosophy is the philosophy of its own day, a link in the whole chain of spiritual development'.²⁷

The history of philosophy does not, however, entirely mirror world-history. Not all cultures have risen to the high abstractions of philosophy. Hegel's Orientals were, in general, too immersed in naturalistic modes of consciousness to think universally, and despite some promising material, neither Chinese nor Indian thought is quite 'philosophy' in his sense: Hegel does not share the enthusiasm of Friedrich Schlegel and Schopenhauer for

²³ *SL* 124; cf. *EL* §95, *LP* 3.552 ('Throughout all time there has been only one philosophy').

²⁴ *PR*, Preface; cf. *LP* 1.44, 2.96.

²⁵ Remarks on the biographies of, say, Gorgias, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Diogenes, Chrysippus, Arcesilaus, Philo, and Proclus well illustrate the principle. But because 'lower' forms of spirit or culture are absorbed in philosophical thought, biographical details become superfluous in a history of philosophy: this became an influential methodological principle. Hegel therefore glides past many extra-philosophical developments: he merely glances at Anaximander's innovative map, sundial, and star-chart, or his theory that 'supposes man to develop from a fish' (*LP* 1.187); sidelines the scientific accomplishments of Pythagoreans, Platonists, Peripatetics; and fairly ignores the monotheism emerging in Xenophanes.

²⁶ *LP* 2.13.

²⁷ *LP* 1.44.

Indian 'wisdom'. His Greeks, by contrast, were in their aestheticism able to break free from natural immediacy, and for the thousand years from Thales to Proclus, remained the acknowledged masters and preceptors of the Romans. Hence 'Roman' (as well as medieval Christian, Jewish, and Arab) philosophy was for Hegel only a derivation, or at best an elaboration, of the Greek.²⁸ Scattered remarks on Roman thinkers converge on the verdict that Romans' prosaic *Verstand* was not hospitable to the speculative depth of philosophical *Vernunft*.²⁹ The upshot is that there are only two fundamental branches of philosophy: the Greek, and the 'Germanic' or modern European. These have different but complementary tasks:

The manner of study of the ancient world differs from that of the modern world in this, that the former was the forming to perfection [*Durchbildung*] of the natural consciousness. Putting itself to the test in every aspect of its existence and philosophizing about everything that happened, it [i.e. the natural consciousness] developed itself into a thoroughly activated universality. In modern times on the other hand the individual finds the abstract form ready made; the straining to grasp it and make it his own is more the unmediated drawing forth of the inward, and truncated production of the universal than its emergence from the concrete and from the manifoldness

²⁸ This Hegelian view recurs in e.g. P. Brown 1971: 17, 73.

²⁹ Rome produced no distinctive philosophy of its own: see esp. *LP* 2.233–5 (citing Tacitus), 2.276. The reception of the three Scholarchs in Rome in 155 BC foreshadows Roman ambivalence towards philosophy: Carneades' opposing speeches on justice and injustice introduced the Romans to 'opposition in the Notion', delighting the young, but appalling traditionalists like Cato and Caius Acilius, who moved to exile all philosophers from the city. Hegel mentions the incident several times (e.g. *LP* 2.241–2, 2.319–20; cf. Plutarch *Cato Maior* 22): the 'prosaic' Roman mind never had any speculative depth. Cicero, therefore, is a politician and a compiler, Seneca scintillating but superficial, Marcus a derivative moralizer. Cicero gets the roughest handling for his 'most slovenly history of philosophic thought on God', i.e. *De Natura Deorum* (1.16), his inability to comprehend Heraclitus (1.167, 1.281) or Aristotle (2.129), his plebeian moralizing and 'fireside philosophy' (1.91, 1.93, 1.388–9), his dull dialogues (2.12), and his overall 'shallowness' as he often 'takes up a wrong idea' (1.281), juxtaposes disparate 'points of view' in undialectical, Sophistic fashion (2.127–8), and even shows an 'utter want of appreciation of the state of affairs in his country' (2.375). His *De Officiis* is 'a book of moral teaching more comprehensive and better than all the books of Confucius': dubious praise if it were better for Confucius' reputation if his works 'had never been translated' (1.120–1). In all, Hegel's Cicero is 'but a troubled spring—since he undoubtedly gives us much information; yet because he was lacking in philosophic spirit, he understood Philosophy rather as if it were a matter of history merely' (1.167; cf. 2.225). Despite Hegel's own ambition to 'teach philosophy to speak German' (letter, May 1805), he does not give much credit to Cicero for forging a philosophical vocabulary in Latin. Hegel's abuse of Cicero reverses typical Enlightenment judgments, which lionized Cicero above Plato and Aristotle, and canonized 'Tully's *Offices*' as one of the great books: Voltaire debated whether to call this or *De Natura Deorum* 'the best book of all antiquity' (see Gay 1966: 105–9).

of existence. Hence nowadays the task is not so much to purify the individual from the immediate mode of sense consciousness, and make it an object of thought and a thinking substance, but rather to do the opposite: to actualize the universal and to bring it to life by superseding fixed determinate thought-forms.³⁰

To paraphrase: in the world-historical arc from substance to subjectivity, Hegel's aesthetic Greeks rose out of an 'Oriental' immersion in nature to contemplate the experiencing mind as itself an 'object of thought', a concrete 'universality', replete with organizing categories. The modern 'Germanic' thinker, by contrast, faced with an already rich tradition, is tasked not so much with discovering fundamental ideas as with thinking through and systematizing old ones, exploring their mutual relations and exemplifying them in experience. In a word, the ancient's task is analytic, the modern's synthetic. Or even more crudely, and to adopt the ancient rhetorical schemata: the Greeks' task was invention (*heuresis, inventio*), the moderns' arrangement (*diathesis, dispositio*).³¹

Despite its simplicity, PS's generalization about the complementarity of 'ancient' and 'modern' thinking remains a unifying theme of Hegel's life-work. It has roots in his school-day admiration for the subjective immediacy of the ancients, unburdened by 'cold book-learning' and arid, inherited abstractions.³² It harks back to his early plans to popularize Kantianism as a *Volkserzieher*.³³ It finds a major application in SL's attempt to supersede 'fixed thought-forms' and unify them into a single, articulated Concept: the fusion of the logical insights made from Parmenides on. It comes to fruition too in the Berlin lectures as they seek to 'deduce' the actualities of the will,

³⁰ PS §33 (tr. Baillie).

³¹ Leibniz intended his *ars characteristica* to be both *ars demonstrandi* and *ars inveniendi* (Dumitriu 1977: III.140–3). Successors like Wolff stressed the former: 'for every thinker from Locke to Kant', philosophy 'was considered to be intrinsically unable to add anything new to the store of human knowledge. At best, it could put what we already possessed in order' (Norton 1995: 9). So too for Hegel: to philosophize is simply 'to think things over' (*Nachdenken*), 'transform representations into thoughts' (EL §20), and so elicit ever more universal form from material already shaped into preliminary form by specialized disciplines.

³² 'Subjectivity was the original object of Hegel's most passionate devotion; and he bore witness to the source of his inspiration when he repeated in the Preface to the *Phenomenology* the thesis that we have just quoted from his Gymnasium essay of 1788' (Harris 1972: 38–9, alluding to PS §33, quoted on pp. 252–3).

³³ See, for instance, a letter to Schelling in 1795: 'From the Kantian system and its highest completion I expect a revolution in Germany. It will proceed from principles that are already present and that only need to be elaborated generally and applied to all hitherto existing knowledge' (in Butler and Seiler 1984: 35–6; cf. Hoffmeister and Nicolin 1961–81: 1.24).

art, and religion from their concept, and ultimately *the* Concept. But it is enacted perhaps most successfully in *LP*. This does complicate *PS*'s neat division of 'Greek' and 'Germanic', by inserting medieval Christian philosophy as a kind of minor term mediating between ancient and modern. But abstracting from this, one finds the same basic dynamic as in *PS*: for Hegel, the Greek thinkers travel the 'way up' from naturalistic experience to the spiritual life of *Nous*, understood now as the totality that underlies all reality. Yet this totality is not grasped concretely, and so by the end of antiquity the Greeks' tendency to praise theory over praxis and absolutize 'divine' self-sufficiency has hardened into a fixed opposition of the spiritual reality (*Nous*, God, philosophy, the sacred) over against a fallen world (nature, man, work, the secular). Similar dichotomies face the early modern thinker, but now in its deeper self-certainty, the absolute *subject* seeks to comprehend its 'others' and itself as part of a singular whole. Empirical realism and *a priori* idealism seek this comprehension from different directions, but converge on the same end: objective or absolute idealism, Hegel's own historically concrete system.³⁴

Whether or not one accepts this historical vision, or the contention that European philosophy forms a single, differentiated whole—a perennial idealism that evolved through the ages, even through pluralism, materialism, and other seeming opposites—still, Hegel's lectures on ancient philosophy are detailed, challenging, and rewarding. They have certainly been influential.³⁵ To attempt to do them justice, I have not stinted on detail, attempting in particular to foreground the degree to which Hegel's many UPI readings (and the ontological logic they presuppose) mesh with the ancient sources. His general procedure in *LP* is to offer a few biographical details, then order his subject's ideas according to the triad of Logic–Nature–Mind, often quoting at length, with interspersed explanations and remarks, and finally a translation into Hegelese—thus allegedly fulfilling the twin demands of historical fidelity and philosophical acumen. At times, the balancing act is

³⁴ For such thoughts relating ancient, medieval, and modern philosophy, see *LP* 3.157–69. Ancients thinking from the 'immediately existent' to informing universals: e.g. *LP* 1.403–4 (Plato's dialogues), 2.49–52.

³⁵ Works by Feuerbach, J.E. Erdmann, E. Zeller, K. Fischer, and Marxists ensure that 'for the history of philosophy, the whole nineteenth century was the age of Hegel' (Beiser, *LP* 1.xxix). One could add the many twentieth-century scholars (e.g. Coplestone, Reale) who follow Hegel's division of Greek thought into 'objective' Presocratic cosmology, 'subjective' Sophistic anthropology, and synthesizing post-Socratic systems. Moreover, his reflections on e.g. Plato, Aristotle, Brucker are an early contribution to the 'history of the history of philosophy' (Geldsetzer 1968) and the 'history of philosophy as a philosophical problem' (Kolmer 1999; cf. Beelman 2001, Flasch 2005 et al.).

precarious, interpretations strained and perhaps even wrong. Yet, shortcomings aside, these lectures come close to Hegel's ideal immersion course and present a seductive argument that the ancient thinkers do indeed form one 'golden chain' of idealism, embracing the ascent from Thales' Water to Aristotle's concrete *universal* (U), the *particularization* of this principle through the Hellenistic systems (P), and the final Neoplatonic synthesis of all past insights into a single principle—which they take as an ineffable One, rather than more correctly as infinite *nous* or Idea (I).

5.2. Thales to Aristotle

5.2.1. Presocratics

That Greek philosophy began with Thales has become a historiographical cliché, but Hegel more interestingly explores a series of tentative 'beginnings' before Thales' beginning: Oriental thinkers, the mythopoetic outlook, Seven Sages. Whether the Greeks were the first true 'philosophers' is a hoary controversy: the ancients debated whether philosophy began among Indian gymnosophists, Chaldaean Magi, Egyptian priests, Celtic Druids, Orpheus, Moses, or other 'first discoverers'. Hermeticists and others long revered Hermes Trismegistes' Egypt as the cradle of the *philosophia perennis*. Enlightenment writers such as Hume, Condorcet, Gibbon, and Kant tended to exalt the Greeks as *the* pioneers of critical thinking, and it was against this consensus that Friedrich Schlegel proposed India as the 'home of wisdom'. Hegel for his part acknowledges a certain Oriental wisdom: many peoples have expressed their deepest knowledge in art-works and religious myths, and the Orient produced great sages in a Confucius, Mencius, Capila, Gotama, and Canade. But wisdom literature is not systematizing philosophy, and so though after 1825 he shows growing interest in Indian philosophy specifically, he rejects Schlegel's hypothesis and reaffirms the more Eurocentric verdict of the Enlightenment.³⁶ On the other hand, his Greece remains ever quite porous, philosophically, to the Orient: Hegel accepts as historical the travels of Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, and others to

³⁶ Ancient conjectures: e.g. Diogenes Laertius 1.1–13. Egypt: e.g. Athanasius Kircher, Magee 2001. Enlightenment consensus: Gay 1966: 73–81. Schlegel's *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808) and Hegel's evolving response: Bernasconi 2003.

Egypt, Babylonia, and elsewhere.³⁷ More broadly, his Mediterranean or 'middle sea' (*Mittelmeer*) is that most 'universal' of all seas, binding the historical continents and offering a stimulus to thought, a stimulus lacking in landlocked Africa and Asia. In particular, it both *opens* Greek lands to the older East, and also *isolates* them enough to allow independent development. Spread from Ionia and the islands across to the mainland, Sicily, and Italy, the Greek world took from its Mediterranean setting its uniquely variegated unity—so different from the stultifying homogeneity of a plains or river-valley culture. Geographical accident thus gave the Greek world an articulated unity, and as it thus mirrored the articulated Concept, Spirit found itself first at home there. Such reasoning also underlies Hegel's reaffirmation of the corollary between philosophy and freedom: Oriental despotism and nature religions do not encourage the bold philosophical speculations made possible by Greek *poleis* and anthropomorphic gods. Equally important, perhaps, is the interiority and subjective self-reliance forced upon the Greeks by their fragmented political landscape. Exile and political strife saw many individuals alienated from their cities. Retreating into thought, they there recreate the world anew: with the Milesians, Pythagoras, Socrates, and Stoics, philosophy begins in disappointment and is nourished in despair. At the same time, Hegel can recall Aristotle's statements that philosophy begins in wonder, or leisure—an idea more consonant perhaps with Hegel's own, aesthetic Greeks.³⁸

³⁷ The Greeks 'certainly received the substantial beginnings of their religion, culture, their common bonds of fellowship, more or less from Asia, Syria, and Egypt' (*LP* 1.150); Thales learned geometry in Egypt (1.172); Anaximander's *apeirôn* has 'an oriental tone' (1.186), as do some of Heraclitus' metaphors (1.289); Pythagoras may have picked up ideas of metempsychosis and caste in Egypt (1.198, 1.233–4); Leucippus spent much of his fortune travelling to Egypt (1.299–300); Plotinus sought out Indian and Brahman sages in Gordian's expedition (2.404). Hegel's inchoate efforts to balance Oriental influence and independent Greek development anticipate Kahn 1960, Heath 1981: 1.3–9, Lloyd 1991: 278–98, West 2001, et al.

³⁸ Loss of political freedom to Lydians and Persians stimulated Milesian thought: *LP* 1.155, cf. 1.322. Samian civil strife drove Pythagoras to travels both spatial and spiritual: 1.198 (with Diogenes Laertius 1.25, 1.171). Disillusionment with traditional art and religion, as well as the sense-world, pushed Xenophanes and Parmenides to the One (1.248); it stung Socrates and successors (esp. Stoics) to contrast 'science' (*epistēmē*) with popular 'opinion' and to seek a city and god within (e.g. *PR* §138R, *LP* 1.408–9, 2.14; cf. Speight 2008: 97); *LP* 3.166–9 contrasts ancients thinkers' proud isolation with the social integration of modern philosopher-professors. Beyond Greece, unhappiness in the late Roman Republic, late antiquity (e.g. *LP* 2.376), and the French Revolution conditioned, respectively, the rise of Christianity, Neoplatonism and the 'unhappy consciousness', and absolute idealism. These moments may inform the famous thesis that philosophy 'paints its grey in grey' when a culture has grown stale (*PR*, Preface; *LP* 1.51–3); Grote quotes the principle approvingly (2009: 1.254c), and Burn offers analogous thoughts on the rise of Ionian historiography (1962: 3); cf. *LR* 3.345 (1827) where philosophy itself 'flees into

Without an anthology like Diels-Kranz, Hegel's account of the Presocratics relies most on the mediation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics I*. But where Aristotle surveys his predecessors for precedents for his four causes, Hegel prefers to interpret their *archai* as progressive articulations of his Idea, the universal cause: in this 'way up', Hegel's Milesians formulated their *Urstoff* in materialistic terms, but were not in fact materialists, for their water, *apeirōn*, and air are single principles unifying all experience, and thus 'three modes of determining the Absolute'. First in this dialectical trio from Miletus is Thales. In a culture devoid of universals, he showed 'great robustness of mind' in piercing through immediate sense-certainty to the inner essence of natural multiplicity. Thus his 'all is water' is formulated in materialistic terms, but is in fact idealist: Thales' Water is not so much the substance that flows in rivers and lakes as the *thought* of a single, self-related universal that becomes and subsumes all its particular manifestations. The principle can therefore be reformulated 'water is the Absolute', as if in his initial gropings Thales had indeed grasped 'the Absolute... as the unity of thought and Being'.³⁹ On the other hand, Thales says little about why or how Water differentiates itself, and so his universal remains 'very abstract and barren', as if still redolent of Oriental pantheism.⁴⁰ Hegel passes over other attributions—that 'everything is full of *daemons*' or that the 'magnet has a soul since it moves iron'—which should intrigue a monist. He also glides over the oldest surviving *prose* passage in Greek—in which Anaximander speculates how all things rise from the unlimited (*apeirōn*) and are punished by the decrees of time for this injustice—but remarks that this Infinite has 'quite an oriental tone', as indefinite as Yahweh, and hence an advance on Thales' Water, which names the universal too naturalistically.⁴¹ A still further advance comes with Anaximenes' Air, more formless than Water, more determinate than the *apeirōn*, now differentiated by a more developed conception of rarefaction and condensation.⁴² His cosmology thus crowns

the Concept' (*in den Begriff flüchtet*), with Graf and Wagner 1982. Wonder: LH 234. Leisure: SL 14 (with Aristotle *Metaphysics* 982b).

³⁹ LP 1.178, 180; cf. SL 124, Stace 1955: §100.

⁴⁰ LP 1.171.

⁴¹ LP 1.186; Burkert compares and contrasts Anaximander's 'divine' *apeirōn* to Olympian gods (1985: 307–8). Anaxagoras' prose fragment lies behind remarks that 'philosophy begins with the prose book' (Burkert 1985: 305), and that 'prose is the medium in which the intellectual revolution of the [Greek] enlightenment is enacted' (Goldhill 2002: 4).

⁴² Though Thales and Anaximander developed the theory of rarefaction and condensation (LP 1.187), Hegel seems to doubt that Thales' was very precise (1.180–1). Modern scholars attribute it more firmly still to Anaximander (e.g. Warren 2007: 34).

Milesian thought, by making explicit its inchoate grasp of the concrete universal. Furthermore, his association of *aēr*, breath (*pneuma*), life, and soul anticipates the further evolution of substance to subject, nature to mind, as the first material Absolute becomes a potential matrix of life and spirit. It is in this context that Hegel finds great significance in the tradition that Anaximenes' student was Anaxagoras, first teacher of cosmic *Nous*.⁴³

The western Greek tradition converged on the same conclusion: Anaxagoras' *Nous* is the *telos* implicit in Eleatic pure reason and its immediate predecessor, the Pythagorean 'system of the world'. This long-term dialectic can be discerned only in hindsight, however, for the sources of Pythagoreanism are even more complex and overlaid with later interpretations than those of the Milesians. Early Pythagoreanism is all but lost, and Plato in particular can be 'blamed' for 'having destroyed Pythagorean philosophy through absorbing what is Pythagorean in it into his own'.⁴⁴ This is a veritable *Aufhebung*, but careful sifting allows the knowing reader to recover—if not the exact formulations of Pythagoras or Alcmaeon—certainly their basic ideas regarding the universal triad of logic, nature, and spirit.

Hegel's Pythagoreans had no logic *per se* but did approximate one with their mathematical ontology. In focusing on numbers, the Pythagoreans transcended sensuous thought more firmly than the Milesians, but did not fully escape it. Number, according to Hegel, exists between sense particulars and universal thoughts: a number is 'a non-sensuous object of sense'.⁴⁵ Less paradoxically, numbers are understood by Hegel Greek-wise as natural numbers—hence, as abstractions from numbered entities, and composed of so many multiples of one.⁴⁶ As aggregates, numbers reflect the discreteness of extended and temporal things, but at a deeper level mathematical thinking cannot provide a 'logic' of nature, let alone of self-consciousness or even itself, because nature is hospitable to Spirit, its inner 'truth': the categories of Being (to which Quantity belongs) need to be sublated into those of the Idea and thereby applied *mediately* to nature.⁴⁷ Of all this,

⁴³ LP 1.190. ⁴⁴ LP 1.207.

⁴⁵ LP 1.170; cf. EL §19A2, Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1.6, 3.2, 13.1–2, and the discussion of quantum in SL (with Stace 1955: §223).

⁴⁶ Numbers as multiples, 'repetitions of the one' (i.e. I, II, III, IIII...): LP 1.210. This understanding of number is both proto-Neumannian and neo-Pythagorean: 'the Pythagorean definition of number as *plêthos monadôn*, an assemblage of units' is 'the standing definition of *arithmos* in Greek philosophy' (A. Taylor 1918: 611).

⁴⁷ Mure 1950: 73–4 has interesting remarks on EL §99A. Hegel shares Aristotle's refusal to identify philosophy with mathematics (*Metaphysics* 992a32).

Hegel's Pythagoreans remain innocent. Overawed by the promise of mathematics, they crudely state 'All is number', and identify numbers with things themselves. This is a naïve idealism: things are not numbers, but the Idea—which has a quantitative dimension. Yet it remains profoundly suggestive: the Pythagorean construction of numbers (from one to two to three) and space (by progressive extensions of the point, line, and surface) underlies the metaphysical progression from Monad to Dyad, Triad, and Tetrad—a progression which *could* be taken to anticipate the logical advance from (1) immediate being-in-self to (2) distinction and mediation to (3) their final differentiated unity.⁴⁸ The ontological character of this quasi-mathematical system is seen especially in the Pythagorean Table of Opposites, that rudimentary list of categories that manifests the universal presence of the Dyad, and still retains some purchase today.⁴⁹ An even more 'profound form' is the Pythagorean Triad, which—at once singular, internally pluralized, and self-generating—roughly anticipates the Christian Trinity and Hegelian Idea.⁵⁰ Hegel even suggests that the Tetraktys, revered by Pythagoreans as 'the root of eternal nature... the *Logos* of the universe', remains 'even now equally esteemed in natural philosophy' because there are four elements, four continents, and 'in nature four is found to be present everywhere':⁵¹ strange remarks for the early 1800s, when any numerological pieties might have been better directed to numbers like *e*, *pi*, or the golden ratio.

Elsewhere Hegel is (with Aristotle) as sceptical of Pythagorean numberlore as he is dubious about the exact equivalences they draw between, say, the Monad, arithmetical unit, geometrical and physical point. Nevertheless, he recognizes in the mathematical 'system of the world' a new rational self-confidence: these Pythagoreans boldly set aside the noise of the senses, and

⁴⁸ *EL* §104A3 entertains, and dismisses, these identifications as too simplistic. Hegel's 'construction' of empirical nature from the Concept—the concept of space is particularized in the notion of a 'point' or 'place', some 'here' that is both conceptually indeterminate and physically real; the displacement of a point is a line, of a line a surface, of a surface a body, and of a body a moving thing (*EN* §256)—is judged by Stepelevich to be 'unique in the history of geometry' (1998: 84–7). I suggest instead that it reworks Pythagorean nature as the self-evolution of the One (see Rappe 2000: 117–28 for Neoplatonist texts and discussion).

⁴⁹ Despite resembling the haphazard 'Indian enumeration of principles and substances' (*LP* 1.216), this table is the 'imperfect beginning of a table of categories', and its principle of duality remains an 'essential moment in the Absolute' (1.215).

⁵⁰ *LP* 1.221. According to Inge, Pythagorean 'number-mysticism' about the number three 'provided a framework for all Hellenic speculation': for Iamblichus and Proclus, most notably, 'the number one is the "cause" of identity and unification, two of procession and differentiation, three of the return of all things to their first principle' (1923: 1.122).

⁵¹ *LP* 1.222–3 (an approach implicitly taken up in Jung's quarterternities); cf. 2.77 for further explanation.

resolutely construe the world in the half-ideal language of number. Number may not be rational enough for all reality, and the deduction of everything from the One is inadequate, yet with their Triad and Tetraktys, the Pythagoreans did stammeringly speak of identity-in-difference. Their highest doctrine, the theory of the music of the spheres, was also a noble failure. This related heavenly phenomena according to mathematical ratios, and posited a perfect, soundless music as rationally necessary even if *we* cannot physically hear it. Even if the theory is wrong, Hegel takes time to evaluate it rationally, for there is a 'grandeur' in this 'wonderful conception' as it struggles to articulate the non-sensuous laws of the sensuous.⁵²

Number-ontology is even less appropriate to the things of the soul and mind. That the soul is a 'self-moving number'; that the Platonic Demiurge twists triangles and circles into souls; that sun-motes have 'soul' because they are in perpetual motion; that Pythagoras' soul once animated a son of Hermes, a Homeric warrior, and a Delian fisher: all this is a witches' brew of profundity and rubbish, hardly worth sifting, and the central idea of metempsychosis Hegel brushes aside as 'oriental and un-Greek', picked up from Egyptian priests and expressing at best a primitive pantheism.⁵³ And yet, nothing is absolutely false. Just as the Trinity is first swaddled in numerological straw, so beneath much Pythagorean 'confusion and turbidity of thought' there gleams an idea that is profoundly true: the soul is 'a system which is a counterpart of the system of the heavens', informed by the same conceptual scheme as nature.⁵⁴

The systematic spirit emerging through Pythagoreanism culminates in its ethical teaching and practice, which Hegel presents last. Now the great isomorphism between numbers, nature, and soul is extended to human society: just as numbers inform and are phenomena, so a mathematical elite should rule a society informed by their wisdom and composed of their students. To this end, the content of the Golden Verses may be fairly conventional, yet the fact that such maxims were *collected* for organized meditation is a significant step. Just as remarkable is the formation of the Pythagorean Brotherhood and its efforts to shape individual members into a harmonious whole. In this great enterprise, the Brotherhood did not go far enough. Just as number lies between sense-particulars and ideas, so the

⁵² LP 2.230–1.

⁵³ Witches' brew: LP 1.195. Metempsychosis: 1.233–4 (following Herodotus 2.123, Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.16, Diogenes Laertius 8.14).

⁵⁴ 'Turbidity': LP 1.228. System: 1.233.

Brotherhood was neither a mere aggregate of individuals nor a community proper, but something intermediate—between the traditional *polis* and the modern, rational state. Educating only a few followers, its moral precepts did not pervade the daily life of all, and so the Pythagorean League appeared ‘arbitrary’ to its subjects and could not endure in the Greek context. Nevertheless, a central truth had been broached: people become full individuals only in a ‘well-regulated state’ and the promise of the ancient Brotherhood is being fulfilled in modern monarchy.⁵⁵

The intermediate nature of Pythagorean mathematics and politics reflects the broader tendency of Pythagoreanism to mediate between the Milesians’ sensually conceived Absolute and the Eleatics’ pure Being. Thus, where common sense may regard Pythagoreanism as ‘thoroughly paradoxical, and indeed quite mad’, for Hegel, on the contrary, it falls short not for being idealistic, but for not being idealistic *enough*.⁵⁶ That shortcoming would be remedied in Eleaticism, which rises to *pure* contemplation of the One and so sets philosophy on *terra firma*.⁵⁷ The notion of Being, *ens entium*, and *ens realissimum* has become a philosophical commonplace, but for Hegel modern Spinozists reach by a negative route of abstraction what the Eleatics grasp by the first pure thinking of thought. The general Eleatic position is that Being, the One, or ‘it’ alone is, and that what is cannot not be. This Eleatic ‘it is’ (*esti*) not only establishes monism—i.e. of a substance ‘unbegotten and imperishable, whole, unlimited, unwavering, and without end’—but also an idealistic monism, for the first product of ‘pure thought is, in its immediacy, Being’.⁵⁸ The first pure thought is ‘Being’, and so Parmenides’ controversial line 8.34 is translated in terms of Hegel’s own idealism as ‘thought, and that on account of which thought is, are the same’. This identity of thought and being is the banner of philosophy itself, to be elaborated by all subsequent thinkers of note and well symbolized by Parmenides’ image of a well-rounded sphere.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *LP* 1.236–7; cf. *NL* 162, *PR* §153R (Pythagorean advice to a father: ‘Make him [your son] a citizen of a state with good laws’).

⁵⁶ *EL* §104A3.

⁵⁷ ‘Parmenides began philosophy proper’: 1.254; cf. *EL* 86A2.

⁵⁸ *LP* 1.243. Unbegotten whole: Brown 2006: 60–1.

⁵⁹ Translation: *LP* 1.253. Sphere as all-inclusive figure: 1.254. See also *SL* on ‘Being’, the Eleatic discovery (60). Dunham, Grant, and Watson 2011: 10–18 cite passages showing how Parmenides’ fragments (esp. B8) have and can be interpreted in various idealistic modes—objective (e.g. Hegelian), panpsychist, and subjective—contrary to G.E. Moore, Burnyeat, and B. Williams for whom ‘idealism’ belongs only to modern philosophy; relevant here is Mure’s distinction between ‘implicit and explicit idealism’ (1950: 53–5).

Parmenides' deductions are compelling, so long as one adopts his 'pure' orientation. For those who don't, there is Zeno. By provisionally suspending his own Eleaticism, assuming opposite premises and deducing the paradoxical consequences, Hegel's Zeno does not so much refute 'the many' as show how non-Eleatic concepts refute *themselves*. This negation of anti-Eleaticism is Eleaticism once again—a double negation more profound than the first, simple positive deduction. First of all, Zeno has closed the circle of thought: entering his opponents' position without losing his own therein, Zeno's thinking comprehends both itself and its opposite, a clear advance over the simpler 'enthusiasm' of Parmenides. Indeed, Zeno's dialectic illustrates the dynamic of the Idea itself and so for Hegel his paradoxes *do* show how natural phenomena synthesize opposites: the arrow is both here and not here, and this contradiction is the source of its motion; a distance or duration is both continuous and discrete, for one can abstract either aspect from their concrete unity; time and space unite both cohesive totality and repelling being-for-self. With his *own* categories Hegel thus claims to complete the solution of Zeno's paradoxes that Aristotle first offered in his *Physics*.⁶⁰ But while paradoxes in phenomenal motion and plurality led Zeno to reject them as illusory in comparison with the One, in Hegel's revision nature itself manifests contradictions or tensions that are held together more firmly by the 'thought-determinations' of Being and Quantity. Hegel's Zeno exemplifies this 'metaphysical reasoning' and 'objective dialectic'—the 'pure soul of science',⁶¹ inasmuch as he thinks nature through 'pure' concepts like being and not-being, one and many, limit and infinity.

The lessons of this master dialectician were not lost on subsequent thinkers: Aristotle's *Physics* takes up his arguments, Plato's *Parmenides* is 'written in the spirit of the Eleatic school',⁶² and all subsequent Presocratic cosmology rises to the challenge of reconciling the Eleatic One with natural motion and plurality. In fact, for Hegel, this necessary conjunction of opposites filters into Parmenides' work too. Thinking the proposition 'Being is not' to be impossible, Parmenides resisted all attempts to negate and differentiate Being. And yet, as if intuiting also its negative, non-Being,

⁶⁰ See *SL* 164–5 with *EL* §§89, 100. For Mure, Hegel's reading of *Physics* 6.9 is 'undoubtedly' correct (1950: 60–2); for Stace, Hegel solves Zeno's paradoxes 'at one stroke' (1955: 158–9); but for Inwood, Hegel's 'solution' to Kant's second and other antinomies 'side-steps' the issue (1999: 239). Nevertheless, Inwood surmises that Hegel's discussion of time and space 'probably owes more to Zeno, Plato and Aristotle, than to Kant' (1987: 49).

⁶¹ *LP* 1.245, 1.261.

⁶² *LP* 1.249.

Parmenides was impelled beyond mere reasoning (*Verstand*) to a cosmology that blends hot and cold, light and dark, into some sort of delimited sphere. This ostensibly materialistic language (appropriate for 'two-headed fools' who wander the 'Way of Seeming') is not incompatible with an overall idealism, for the sphere perfectly images a One that is self-related, alone, and unbounded or infinite. From this perspective, Hegel surmises that arguments about the reality, intelligibility, and communicability of non-Being, often ascribed to Gorgias, show a sophistication that cannot be anything but the product of *late* Eleaticism. In any case, as his One overreaches itself to incorporate the cosmic many, Parmenides provides a model for all subsequent thinkers, cosmological and otherwise. In the syntheses of Anaxagoras, Democritus, and Empedocles, some principle of 'Being' (*homoioimerē*, atoms, or elements) is conjoined with the correlative principle of non-Being (void, space) to produce sensed phenomena; in the subjective dialectic of Sophists and Sceptics, man becomes the sole measure of Being and non-Being, what is and what is not; in the more objective dialectic of Plato, Ideas determine less real beings; in Aristotle's theology, Stoic pantheism, and Neoplatonic monism, a single principle embraces its seeming opposites. Indeed, Hegel's Eleatics are the first moderns in that they intuitively broached the notion of absolute Spirit, which also 'overreaches' and incorporates that which seems other to its pure self-determination.

Hegel's interpretation of the post-Eleatic 'pluralists' like Empedocles and Democritus has become fairly standard, but none of his 'Eleatic' interpretations is more striking than that of Heraclitus. Here the thinker of becoming becomes as Eleatic as Parmenides himself, for what Hegel's Heraclitus did was to extend Zeno's notion of unified opposites to *all* determinate phenomena. Zeno's 'objective' dialectic was not applied universally, but with Heraclitus' notion of Becoming, all reality is understood explicitly as unity of opposites. In Hegel's logic, Becoming is the first such unity, as it synthesizes Being and non-Being: for Aristotle, when an entity changes from P to ~P, it is partly P and partly ~P; so too Hegel, 'what becomes is not and yet it is'.⁶³ This first thought-determination (Hegel boldly claims) was first understood explicitly by Heraclitus and equated with the Absolute—named vividly as fire, the thunderbolt, Zeus, God, the *Logos*. Hegel thus views Heraclitus' fragments as variations on a theme which Aristotle too had summed up in 'the great saying: "Being and non-Being are the same; everything is and yet is

⁶³ LP 1.404.

not'''.⁶⁴ To give a paraphrase of some of the fragments of Hegelian interest: the way up and way down are one and the same; the screw's path is crooked and straight; the circle begins and ends in the same point; we step and do not step into the same river, we are and are not; seawater is fair and foul, honey bitter and sweet; God is day and night, summer and winter, hunger and satiety, war and peace; war is the father of all things, so stirring makes the *kukeōn*, tension tunes the lyre, and in tense 'disagreement' with itself the bow is strung; thus the one cosmos runs on, an everlasting fire kindling and quenching itself according to intelligible measure—the one self-evolving Concept, as it were.⁶⁵

But where Heraclitus' riddles earned him the nickname 'the dark' (*sko-teinos*) and prompted Socrates to muse that only a Delian diver could plumb their depths, Hegel from his higher historical perch claims to have indeed penetrated those depths. Their wonderful profundity is not really due to any fragmentary status, deliberate obscurity, bad composition, or lack of punctuation.⁶⁶ It is rather their speculative depth that baffles superficial readers, marooned at the level of the understanding, while with his logical compass, Hegel is able to pierce any lingering murk of mystification, collect and order all those jagged fragments, bobbing up through the confused currents of ancient annals, and tow them to harbour within his completed system. 'Here we see land; there is no proposition of Heraclitus which I have not adopted in my Logic.'⁶⁷ On this *terra firma* the edifice of philosophy has been built, for from Heraclitus' Becoming, even more than Thales' Water or Parmenides' Being, 'dates the ever-remaining Idea which is the same in all philosophers to the present day'.⁶⁸ In thinking Becoming, Heraclitus

⁶⁴ LP 1.282, referring to *Metaphysics* 4.3, 4.7. Mure notes anachronisms in Hegel's readings of Parmenides and Heraclitus, yet defends them as the 'truth' of the Presocratics (1950: 36–7).

⁶⁵ Heraclitus' fragments: D.-K. B60 (road), B59 (screw), B103 (circle), B61 (seawater), B49a (river), B67 (God), B80 (war), B125 (barley-drink), B51 (bow and lyre). Many commentators follow Hegel's lead. Grote admires the Hegelian interpretations of Marbach and Lassalle (2009: I.280). Kahn acknowledges 'an anticipation of Hegelian dialectic in Heraclitus' treatment of the opposites' (1979: 188–9). Warren's Heraclitus orients natural oppositions towards 'God, for whom all these oppositions are unified' (2007: 68–9). Most of all, Reale (1987: 49–52) interprets the fragments according to the principle of 'God' as 'harmony of contraries, the unity of opposites' (51), concluding that Heraclitus 'anticipates in an impressive way the basic notion of Hegelian dialectic' (52).

⁶⁶ LP 1.280–1. Hegel acknowledges Aristotle's and Demetrius' point regarding lack of punctuation (*Rhetoric* 3.5, *De Elocutione* 192) but scorns Cicero's explanation: 'Cicero (*De Natura Deorum* I.26; III.14; *De Finibus* II.5) takes up a wrong idea, as often happens to him; he thinks that Heraclitus purposely wrote obscurely. Any such design would, however, be a very shallow one, and it is really nothing but the shallowness of Cicero himself ascribed by him to Heraclitus'.

⁶⁷ LP 1.279.

⁶⁸ LP 1.282.

recognized the Idea in its 'first concrete form' and his reality is reality itself—a dynamic, self-differentiating whole, constituted by the very opposites that it produces and holds in tension.

Heraclitus' philosophy of Becoming is thus not 'past and gone'⁶⁹ but very much current, when the fragments are touched to life by a living intelligence. Surveying the ancient attestations that Heraclitus spoke of the prime 'element' alternately as time, water, Fate, soul, *logos*, and fire, Hegel finds interest in each of these and even the very plurality of names reflects the nature of Heraclitean Becoming. Time is particularly intriguing: time for Hegel is a sensuous manifestation of logical Becoming, and so Heraclitus' fire becomes 'physical time'.⁷⁰ Moreover, as Heraclitus depicts the ceaseless passage of one element into another—water living the death of earth, air of water, fire of air, as they cycle the 'way up' from earth to fire, and sink again 'down', hot bright stars cooling and darkening into earth and so on—Hegel surmises that Heraclitus' 'way up' may be correlated with his language of 'friendship', 'harmony', and the unification of opposites into all-consuming fire, while the 'way down' to diffuse earth may be that of 'war', 'strife', and division. In all, the cosmos is 'a metamorphosis of fire' and though such 'oriental, metaphorical expressions'⁷¹ are not worked out in satisfying detail, the underlying ideas are not obsolete. They foreshadow Lavoisier's conservation of matter; they express the truth that 'nature is a circle'. Indeed Hegel's Heraclitus goes beyond the Presocratic naturalists to first articulate a sense of the unity of consciousness and nature, particularly in that passage of Sextus Empiricus from which Diels and Kranz would extract fragments B1 and B2.⁷² Namely, the small-minded regard mind as separate from nature, but all such become, in Heraclitus' 'beautiful, natural, childlike language',⁷³ sleepers and dreamers who wall themselves off into their particularity, oblivious to their membership of the larger, nourishing universal. Only when the little self wakes to its participation in the whole can it begin to 'dry out' in contemplation of the universal 'fire', and replace its private dreams with knowledge of the one *logos*. In effect, then, Hegel's Heraclitus does have a proto-Stoic doctrine of *logos*: more, he anticipates Spinoza's neo-Stoic 'contemplation of things in the guise of eternity', and the 'being-for-self of [Hegelian] reason' as it wakes to its own objective universality.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ LP 1.283. ⁷⁰ LP 1.287. ⁷¹ LP 1.289.

⁷² LP 1.293, Sextus *Adversus Mathematicos* 7.129–33. ⁷³ LP 1.293.

⁷⁴ LP 1.297. The Heraclitean image of reality as a fire that grows as it consumes its own material returns in Marcus Aurelius' descriptions of the Stoic spirit (*Meditations* 4.1, 10.31)—and in Hegel's analysis of the 'I' (EL §42A1).

Those who would sometimes be named the 'Pluralists' are far less compelling to Hegel than Heraclitus, but they too recall Eleatic forebears and anticipate modern heirs. From Gassendi to Bošković, Priestley, Lavoisier, and Dalton (whose *New System of Chemical Philosophy* (1808) appeared shortly after Hegel's *Phenomenology*), atomism has not only been 'revived' but often regarded as 'the principle of rational science' itself.⁷⁵ Yet ancient atomism, Hegel argues, more obviously bears the stamp of its idealist origins and truth: unlike the modern molecule or 'atomic' particle, the ancients' atom cannot be seen with a microscope any more than the One can. More particularly, the historical record 'definitely' makes Leucippus a student of Zeno, while at the conceptual level, Aristotle's interpretation rightly equates Leucippus' atom and void with the Eleatics' Being and non-Being, respectively.⁷⁶ Both exist as essential and opposing components of nature—the discrete, solid atom that 'is', and the continuous, empty vacuum that, voided of all determination, 'is not'. Unchanging, unmixed with otherness, capable of only external relations, atom and void are both refractions of the Eleatic One; logically, their pure self-relation instantiates the category of being-for-self. But this conceptualization of the Absolute is 'immature'.⁷⁷ It allows only a mechanical combination of atoms—an approach that becomes even more desperate when souls are explained as amalgamations of smooth, 'spherical atoms', or sensations and thoughts as combinations of atomic *eidōla*.⁷⁸ This reduction of sensuous *qualia* to colourless, silent atoms is as superficial as the speculations of modern atomists, and fails to grasp either nature or itself.⁷⁹ For clearly atomism is *not* a form of materialism: just as 'the non-conceptual' and 'matter' are themselves concepts, so the ideas of the *uncuttable*, *empty*, and *non-ideal* are themselves *ideas*. Democritus' atoms and void rehearse the nature and attributes of Parmenides' One, but in such a way that they can more easily serve as causes and constituents of nature, sensation, and thought. That is, the atomists' more particular explanation of each phenomenon as a 'unity of opposites' (i.e. atom and void, Being and non-Being) initiates a 'metaphysics of body' and an idealism of the sensuous by which thought 'passes over' into objectivity and becomes 'the true essence of things'.⁸⁰ Hegel thus decries materialistic interpretations that lower atomism to a function of sensation rather than of thought. But the ancient

⁷⁵ LP 1.300. ⁷⁶ 'Definitely': LP 1.299. Aristotle's *Metaphysics* 1.4: 1.301.

⁷⁷ Being-for-self: e.g. LP 1.302, EL §98. 'Immature': 1.298. ⁷⁸ LP 1.310.

⁷⁹ LP 1.308.

⁸⁰ Atomistic 'unity of opposites': LP 1.301. 'Metaphysics of body', 'ideality of the sensuous': 1.298. 'True essence': 1.303. 'The atom is indeed itself a thought': EL §98A1.

atomists *themselves* he welcomes as fellow travellers. Though their category of being-for-self was immature, it allowed them to envision the cosmos monistically, as a lawful whole, self-related, self-causing: they therefore dismissed the notion of gods, forces or principles external to the totality, in such a way that thinking could 'find itself in it'.⁸¹

Hegel is less at home with the exotic reports of Empedocles. The 'magician and sorcerer' who refused the crown of Acragas, claimed to be a god in exile, and disappeared miraculously, only to be exposed when one of his bronze sandals was found on Mt Etna—this fabulous Empedocles would inspire Hölderlin's character, as well as Goethe's Faust and Nietzsche's Zarathustra. But from the Swabian professor this marvellous beast elicits only the deflating judgment that he 'is more poetic than definitely philosophical', in the end 'not very interesting and much cannot be made of his philosophy'.⁸² He has 'less speculative depth' than Heraclitus and his notion of the synthesis and separation of elements according to principles of Friendship and Strife has, *mutatis mutandis*, the same limitations as ancient atomism and modern chemistry: the mechanical grouping of unchanging elements can account least of all for organic unity, soul and mind. And, like many atomists, Empedocles does not grasp the implications of his own outlook. Here Hegel reworks Aristotle's summary and critique of Empedocles' cosmology: Love and Strife prove equivocal in their operation of uniting and dividing elements, for as Strife splits the primal All into warring elements, they congregate each with their kind—earth with earth, fire with fire—and so Strife indirectly causes the 'friendly' combination of like with like; while Love, in reuniting the different elements into a single One, overcomes their tribal togetherness, separates like from like, and so is a source of division. Therefore the operations of Love and Strife are double: in the Aristotelian conclusion that 'there is no union without separation, no separation without union', Hegel detects the more general truth of the union of identity and difference in all things.⁸³ Empedocles equivocates also in his treatment of the elements: ostensibly variations of Eleatic Being, they are self-related and unchanging; yet they are periodically absorbed in a primordial One, suggesting that they arise as differentiations of the One itself, with each element manifesting particular qualities and powers that are somehow contained implicitly in the One. Aristotle, again, pointed out this equivocation as to whether the four elements or the One is 'real

⁸¹ LP 1.306.⁸² LP 1.312.⁸³ LP 1.317, alluding to Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1.4.

existence': a criticism that Hegel accepts as indicative of an 'absence of thought [that] is in the nature of synthetic conceptions', as they waver between unity and multiplicity and do not think the two together, dialectically.⁸⁴

In all, from Thales to Empedocles, an absolute idealism was clothed in often-sensuous language of water, fire, atoms, mixing, separation, rounded spheres. Yet what unites these different ideas of the Whole as the self-determination of some primal substance—whether Water, Number, Being, Fire, or Atoms and Void—is that each is an *idea*. This fact can be lost sight of, and emphasis misplaced, especially among the atomists. They attempt to reduce all reality (including thinking) to atoms and void, which do not think: thus thought tries to think away thought, and refutes itself in the very attempt. Yet the ideality of the 'atom' and other Presocratic *archai* remains implicit and determinative. Implicit idealism is made *explicit* in Anaxagoras' doctrine that Mind orders the cosmos: this seeming antithesis of the Pluralists' 'materialism' is thus really the completion and truth of the whole tradition hitherto. Anaxagoras returns philosophy to its Eleatic, monistic beginnings, but at a higher level, for now it is not simple Being that determines itself, but Mind. Here is the first real glimmer of the Hegelian idealism that the whole which particularizes itself progressively into all that exists, is not merely 'substance', but 'subject', in-and-for-itself. Indeed, Anaxagoras' principle hints that cosmic *Nous* becomes self-aware in human minds like Anaxagoras' own.⁸⁵ But the hint is recognizable only in hindsight. Anaxagoras himself can only state, abstractly, that *nous* 'rules' the world, and is unable to explain how it 'rules' or how it relates precisely to the 'striking conception' of the *homoioimerē*. Indeed, if this relation reduces to the old, mechanical relation of stirring and shaking, then Socrates' frustration in the *Phaedo* becomes Hegel's own: as an ancient, Anaxagoras could not traverse the 'way down' of modern thought, could not demonstrate how particulars are pervaded by objective 'mind', in the form, for example, of universal genera, natural laws, and immanent ends.⁸⁶ Such considerations cause Hegel to look upon Anaxagoras and his predecessors with a mixture of admiration and pity. From Thales to Anaxagoras: the first period of Greek thought is 'not very great', and Hegel might rebuke readers like Nietzsche and Heidegger who comb it zealously for 'some special wisdom'. Because

⁸⁴ LP 1.319, with Aristotle *De Generatione et Corruptione* 1.1.

⁸⁵ LP 1.326–7.

⁸⁶ Anaxagoras' mechanics: LP 1.336–8. Criticisms of Anaxagoras in *Phaedo* and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* 1.4 quoted at length, and as substantially correct: 1.339–40.

they were pioneers, Hegel's Presocratics struggled to win a few 'poor, abstract, and arid' determinations⁸⁷ and even the light of the Anaxagorean dawn comes clouded and confused.

One leitmotif of these early thinkers' upwards struggle is their solitude: the solitude of a mind waking slowly to consciousness of its own freedom and infinity. The Seven Sages were legislators and statesmen—Pythagoras, Parmenides, Zeno, and Empedocles were somewhat more aloof—Heraclitus scorned the city and its mob—while after Anaxagoras, Socrates and his heirs tended to withdraw altogether from the hurly-burly. Maturing thought thus gradually asserted its independence of the city-state, even while a reflective subjectivity was stimulated by the brilliance of the Athenian democracy, and necessitated by the *anomie* of the Roman Empire. In particular, the classical city was an 'aesthetic' one, and so a free and 'pure' reasoning had to arise in conscious alienation from its beautiful *Sittlichkeit* and aesthetic religion: an alienation apparent in Xenophanes, Eleatics, Heraclitus, and Plato as they condemned polytheistic immoralities and struggled to raise their thinking above the sensuous, aesthetic, and customary. More broadly, thought stripped nature of its divine presences: the hills no longer hid nymphs, the thunder no longer said 'Zeus', the external cosmos became mere organized stuff, the seeming 'negative of mind',⁸⁸ and the old poetry hardened into technical prose. Thus, between Schiller's 'Götter' and Weber's *Entzauberung*, Hegel's Presocratics break up the Greeks' 'childlike' sense of unity with community and nature: thought becomes free first by defining itself *against* an other, posited as opposite. This slow metamorphosis of the Greek mind from imaginative empathy to categorizing objectification is both an advance and regress for Hegel, for while the prosaic *Verstand* gains clarity and precision, it loses the holism of aesthetic intuition. Yet the regress is temporary, the advance enduring. Hegel assures his Romantic contemporaries that 'the loss of this point of view is not to be lamented, as if unity with nature went with it... Reason is just the going forth from such innocence and unity with nature'.⁸⁹ Such language images the Greek philosophers as Adam and Eve, self-exiled from their Arcadian paradise. More explicit is the comparison of philosophers to Jason and the Argonauts: their passing caused the Clashing Rocks to be fixed and lifeless ever since, and so too thinking must first freeze nature's dynamism into a mere 'object', as the Presocratics did.⁹⁰ Once more, this murder of divine nature is an ambiguous

⁸⁷ LP 1.347. ⁸⁸ LP 1.327. ⁸⁹ LP 1.327.

⁹⁰ Argonauts: LP 1.327. Anaxagoras' 'atheism': 1.327–9.

deed: heroic in world-historical terms, yet criminal to Greek sensibilities, and so (abstracting for other motives for the trial) Hegel can understand why the Athenians tried Anaxagoras for 'atheism'. He declared the divine sun, Helios, a burning stone—mad impiety for the time, liberating rationality for all later times.

5.2.2. Sophists and Socrates

The self-assertion of thought becomes even more apparent in Hegel's Sophists, in whose more humanistic outlook Anaxagoras' cosmic Mind is allegedly subjectivized. These enterprising teachers and orators promoted themselves as 'wise men': as 'craftsmen' of persuasion, 'masters of argument', they very nearly made good on the Protagorean boast to 'prove everything, to discover a justifiable side in every position'.⁹¹ Such creatures flourished best in those aesthetic Greek democracies that prized attractive speech, and so, following the critiques of Plato and Aristotle, Hegel understands Sophistic thought not only as an early form of scepticism, but as a thoroughly subjective idealism.⁹² Reality is reduced to the ego and its momentary representations, and if 'man is the measure of all things', the term 'man' is here taken not as universal, rational mind but as the idiosyncratic, wilful individual. 'Advantage to the individual was the ground of final appeal', suggesting that the 'truth' of Sophism comes out in forceful types like Plato's Euthydemus, Callicles, Thrasymachus, or Xenophon's Critias.⁹³ So too, the Sophistic tendency to elevate *physis* over *nomos* verges on a glorification of natural force: a tendency corrosive to Greek *Sittlichkeit*. At the same time, the leading Sophists were 'profound thinkers': Protagoras' 'great proposition' first consciously grasps the idealistic truth that everything is related to Mind, its measure; Sophistic rhetoric generalized Zenonian dialectic to all social phenomena and even to fundamental ontological questions, for Gorgias' 'On Nature' offers a 'pure dialectic' and 'impregnable', proto-Kantian arguments that dissolve the ultimacy of sense-

⁹¹ 'Masters': LP 1.365. 'Prove everything': LH 268, alluding to Protagoras' thesis, 'to every *logos* a *logos* is opposed' (D.-K. A20, B6a). Hegel calls this ability to think about anything from multiple (subjective) 'points of view' the basis of culture, first introduced by the Sophists (LP 1.356–8) and necessary still (LP 1.366–7).

⁹² Hegel's Sophists are emphatically *not* mere empiricists, in the manner of 'our learned professors' (LP 1.352).

⁹³ Ground of appeal: LH 269.

certainty; in all, their conceptual interest in rhetoric and psychology is an incipient thinking about thinking—a step towards Plato's dialectic, Aristotle's logic, the Sceptics' critique of knowledge claims, Kant's antinomies, and Hegel's own logic.⁹⁴

Hegel thus steers between glorifying the Sophists as enlightened, liberal voices (à la Grote) and vilifying them as cunning, self-serving scoundrels. Socrates too he considers in many contexts: the Sophists and their predecessors, Greek *Sittlichkeit* and *Kunstreligion*, the Periclean democracy, philosophical successors, and his modern 'counterpart', Luther. Such a complex character, 'perhaps the most interesting' of the ancient philosophers,⁹⁵ is not to be simplistically praised or condemned, and in evaluating his life and death, Hegel's interpretation remains a mine of insight and suggestion. *LP* focuses on three main themes—Socrates' method, principle of the Good, and ultimate fate—and combines a sense of Socrates' continuity with and difference from the Greek world: his Socrates is at once the 'logical' result of the tradition, and an inner cancer that killed its host-parent, both thoroughly Greek and the catalyst of a proto-Roman, proto-Christian subjectivity.

We have seen how in political history Hegel's Socrates marks an end and a beginning, his intuition of the moral conscience being both an effect of Greek customary freedom and a cause of its decline. In *LP* too, Hegel's Socrates did not arise overnight 'like a mushroom',⁹⁶ but was homegrown, as it were, and deeply rooted. Gesturing towards the fact that Socrates was a sculptor and son of a sculptor (and thus peer of sorts to Pheidias and Praxiteles), a reader of Presocratic books, hearer of Anaxagoras and Archelaus, as well as Prodicus, Damon, and other Sophists, Hegel writes that Socrates was 'esteemed as on all sides a man of culture, who was instructed in everything then requisite'.⁹⁷ But if a person of *Bildung* subordinates his will to universal considerations, then the Socrates depicted in the dialogues (and especially Plato's) is most certainly a 'most highly cultured man who, in his relation to others, never places anything personal in all his wit'. His *Bildung* is equally evident in his virtues: his 'wisdom, discretion, temperance, moderation, justice, courage, inflexibility, firm sense of rectitude', indifference to money, moderation, and so forth all proceeded from

⁹⁴ 'Profound': *LP* 1.384. Protagoras' great 'Man the measure': 1.374. Dialectical Gorgias: 1.379, 1.384. M. Macdonald is excellent on Hegel's Sophists: 'It is Hegel, not Nietzsche, who first draws the decisive parallels between ancient Greek sophistry and the philosophical discourse of modernity' (2006: 23). Hegel's influential, ambivalent reading is touched upon in Guthrie's survey of later verdicts on the Sophists (1971: III.11–13).

⁹⁵ *LP* 1.384.

⁹⁶ *LP* 1.384.

⁹⁷ *LP* 1.390.

the self-possession, or self-consciousness, attained from a life of self-examination.⁹⁸ But where Socrates himself may well have prized reflective harmony between word and deed, Hegel assimilates his hero to the Greek sculptural spirit, as one who moulded himself into one of 'those great plastic natures consistent through and through'. In Socrates' case, it was by the power of free thought that he shaped himself into something like a classical statue, animated in all his aspects by the single principle of rational self-possession. 'Argus-eyed' and 'beautiful' in Hegelian terms, this Socrates is one of the bright 'stars' that revolved around Pericles in that most brilliant of times.⁹⁹ Analogously, Hegel detects a singularity of purpose behind all the attractive variety of the Socratic dialogues: to penetrate subjective opinions to the universal concepts underlying them, and, most pointedly, to 'know the good as the absolute'. This purpose gives the ancient dialogues a beautiful, organic unity lacking in modern ones.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, it would justify the Ciceronian trope that Socrates brought philosophy down from the heavens into cities and market-places, a phrase not to be abused by those moralistic 'babblers' (Cicero himself?) who find in Socrates a 'domestic or fireside philosophy, which conforms to all the ordinary ideas of men', for in reality Socrates rejected the customary *qua* customary and was the first to seek its basis in 'the depths of consciousness'.¹⁰¹

That Socrates made the free culture of Athens more self-conscious is perhaps Hegel's central thesis, and around it he orders all subordinate reflections concerning Socrates' dialectic, *elenchus*, irony, definitions, propositions, and final trial. Here, as he sifts the four sources to resurrect 'the man himself', Hegel prefers Plato's depiction of Socrates' personality and dialectical method, but goes to Xenophon for Socrates' actual ideas:¹⁰² in all, Hegel will construe Socrates' dialectical 'care of the soul' and self-examination as a veiled search for absolute selfhood. This search begins

⁹⁸ 'Highly cultured': LP 1.396. Virtues: 1.394.

⁹⁹ LP 1.393. Hegel does not reflect much on Plato's contrast of beautiful Alcibiades and ugly, satyr-like Socrates (*Symposium* 174a, 215a-c, 216c-d, 221d-e; cf. *Theaetetus* 143e, Aristophanes *Clouds* 362, Xenophon *Symposium* 4.19, 5.5-7): an image interpreted in J.G. Hamann's 1759 *Socratic Memorabilia*, and in Byron's 1824 'Deformed Transformed'.

¹⁰⁰ LP 1.402-3. Guthrie surveys how the search for 'a single aim in each and every dialogue' once seemed to 'obsess the scholarly world' (1971: 4.130). To the implied criticism, a Hegelian might retort that superficial *Verstand* asks, e.g. whether *Phaedrus* is about rhetoric or *erôs*, but philosophical *Vernunft* grasps how such 'opposites' are innerly related.

¹⁰¹ Ciceronian trope: LP 1.389; cf. 3.175 (trope applied to Francis Bacon). 'Babblers', 'depths of consciousness': 1.388; cf. 1.394-6.

¹⁰² LP 1.414. For surveys of the many interpretations of Socrates, see Guthrie 1971: III.5-57, Prior 1996.

with a certain rhetorical distancing from the immediacies of personality and culture. In the *Meno*, *Lysis*, *Republic*, and other encounters, Socrates typically professes his ignorance—a rhetorical irony designed to surprise his interlocutors out of their customary beliefs.¹⁰³ But when his questions induce an interlocutor to articulate position P, Socrates will typically proceed to deduce as its consequence \sim P. So irony and *elenchus* replace the assertion of personalities with the interplay of ideas; Socrates' non-eristic reverence for the *logos* moves the dialogue to a universal, trans-personal level. Or, in Hegel's preferred language, the Socratic *elenchus* reveals concepts refuting *themselves*.¹⁰⁴ Socrates' goal (it is generally agreed) was to articulate essential definitions, which (according to Aristotle) he did through inductive reasoning.¹⁰⁵ As Hegel rephrases the matter, Socrates sought 'the development of the universal from the concrete case, and the exhibition of the Notion which implicitly exists in every consciousness'.¹⁰⁶ This 'Notion' (*Begriff*) is Hegel's rendering of what in more Socratic language is termed 'the Good', the most important universal ethically and even epistemologically—and even ontologically if Plato *Republic* 509b is faithful to the spirit of Socrates' own thinking.

In any case, neither Plato nor Xenophon obviously *identify* the Good with the soul, or the essential *telos* with the thinker's essential nature. Hegel, by contrast, does make the Socratic mind identical with the Good to the degree that it is free, rational, universal, and therefore all-embracing and all-originate. The slippage into a monistic interpretation of ancient sources is evident when he writes:

¹⁰³ Hegel distinguishes Socrates' 'subjective' irony—merely a personal 'manner of speech, a pleasant rallying' (LP 1.309–402)—from the 'objective' irony which Romantics like Friedrich Schlegel and Friedrich Ast drew from the Fichtean Ego. The Romantic ironist flits above all seemingly 'objective' or 'substantial' reality, which he takes up or abandons at will, remaining ever aloof from influence or commitment in his self-absorbed play. For Hegel this extreme subjectivism verges on evil, but he tends not to associate this with his many examples of irony in Greek culture: the careless Homeric gods, the practice of sacrificing of bones and hides to the gods, the 'pain that laughs' (e.g. Laocoön's 'heroic smile'), Aristophanes' comedies expressing 'the vanity of everything, in which my vanity alone remains' (LP 1.401). Deployed to distance interlocutors from their opinions and selves, Socrates' irony becomes a pedagogical trick to lead his hearers 'up' from particulars to universals: education is this progression from nature to Spirit (1.403–4), and Socrates proved such a successful educator that Socratic dialogues are often 'tedious' to modern readers, who grasp easily the inductive generalizations, essential definitions, and deductions that were so novel and hard for Socrates' Greek contemporaries (1.404). As thus both destructive (of particular Greek opinions) and constructive (of a more universalizing rational spirit), Socrates' irony mirrors the 'universal irony of the world' (1.400). A complex theme, Socrates' irony has attracted endless interest, particularly after Kierkegaard's *Concept of Irony*: R. Williams 2003 is one study balancing ancient and modern sources.

¹⁰⁴ E.g. LP 1.404.

¹⁰⁵ *Metaphysics* 13.4.

¹⁰⁶ LP 1.398.

The good does not come from without, Socrates shows; it cannot be taught, but is implied in the nature of mind. That is to say, man cannot passively receive anything that is given from without like the wax that is moulded to a form, for everything is latent in the mind of man, and he only seems to learn it. Certainly everything begins from without, but this is only the beginning; the truth is that this is only an impulse towards the development of spirit. All that has value to men, the eternal, the self-existent, is contained in man himself, and has to develop from himself. (LP 1.410)

Here, drawing together allusions to *Meno* and *Theaetetus*,¹⁰⁷ to Platonic *anamnēsis* and to the Socratic tenets that virtue cannot be taught and that one must subject all to the tribunal of 'pure' reason, such that empirical contingencies become mere occasion for the articulation of their essence, Hegel synthesizes the sources of Socratic psychology into something more obviously redolent of Neoplatonic *Nous*, as he construes it: each person is the Mind in which 'everything is latent' and which evolves itself as the Good of all things, a good not to be identified with pleasure, utility, happiness, or a Platonic 'Good beyond *ousia*' (various candidates for the Good in Xenophon's and Plato's dialogues), but with 'the universal which determines itself in itself, realizes itself, and has to be realized as the end of the world and of the individual'.¹⁰⁸ Thus both the individual mind and its end converge in the one, self-determining Idea. This absolute self-mediation becomes for Hegel the inner meaning of Socrates' intersubjective *elenchus*, irony, and practice of 'midwifery', as it brings forth explicitly that 'which is already contained in the consciousness of the individual'.¹⁰⁹ One might add that it *could* provide deeper grounds for Socratic language of 'friendship', of the soul as an 'inner god', and of the Platonic Ideas as ground for community of experience: in the spirit of friendship, two egos become merged, while in the ecstasy of insight, the individual mind rises to union with all minds; in both cases, the ideal of objective knowledge (e.g. in Ideas) grounds intrasubjective dialogue and experience.

On the other hand, Hegel's Socrates is an idealist *manqué*. Just as Hegelian conscience hovers ambiguously between actual, universal mind and deracinated self-certainty, so Hegel's Socrates is a man of reason, but somewhat vacuously so. His extraordinary commitment to the rational *logos*

¹⁰⁷ *Meno*: 81c–d (mind knows somehow all). *Theaetetus*: 191a–196c (mind as wax tablet), 148e–151d (midwife; cf. LP 1.402–3).

¹⁰⁸ LP 1.407.

¹⁰⁹ LP 1.402.

inaugurates a truly objective ethical thinking.¹¹⁰ Yet his dialectic was inconclusive enough to be easily confused with Sophistic *dissoi logoi*, and his autonomy idiosyncratic and stubborn enough to be taken for mere self-assertion. Not satisfied with his aporetic ‘vacillation’, his failure to define the Good more concretely, Socrates’ followers might seek determinate ‘goods’ in lamentable ways—Alcibiades in treason, Critias in tyranny.¹¹¹ More faithful to his legacy were the philosophers who, along with Plato, evolved more concrete interpretations of Socrates’ seminal concept. His abstract ‘Good’ needed filling, as it were,¹¹² and was given it by the figures whom Zeller, Gomperz, Coplestone, Reale, and others, following Hegel, have often termed ‘minor Socratics’: the Megarians’ logical One (U), the Cyrenaics’ naturalistic pleasure (P), and the Cynics’ cult of personality (I) particularize Socrates’ abstract universal, and are deepened in turn by Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics respectively.¹¹³ Given the fragmentary evidence, such a beautifully symmetric narrative seems hopeful at best, but Hegel regards the fragmentariness itself as proof that these first Socratic ‘apostles’ were indeed minor: their insights absorbed by later thinkers, history passes judgment on them by refusing to preserve their obsolete writings intact.

Socrates’ inchoate grasp of a deeper idealism forms the larger context for Hegel’s portrait of him as a revolutionary, creative and destructive at once. In a heady synthesis of ancient hints, Hegel takes Socrates’ *daimonion* as a kind of inner oracle that supplants the heteronomous authority of Delphi.¹¹⁴ the violence of the Peloponnesian War that ultimately ‘led to the dissolution of Greek life’ was mirrored simultaneously in the ruthless dialectic that makes Socrates emblematic of the ‘ruin of Greek life’.¹¹⁵ At once ethical hero and cultural corruptor, Socrates would carry his dualities into his final trial. In Hegel’s detailed analysis of the event, the twin charges of corrupting

¹¹⁰ See e.g. Plato *Apology* 32a4–e1, *Crito* 48b–d (following the *logos* before all else).

¹¹¹ Vacillation: *LP* 1.416–17. Alcibiades, Critias ‘unfaithful to Socrates’: *LP* 1.421 (citing Xenophon *Memorabilia* 4.1.1, 4.2.40).

¹¹² Socrates’ abstract ‘good’ and Kant’s pure will are subjected by Hegel to similar critiques: each is formally true but needs concrete content, which they get in the Socratic schools (e.g. *LP* 1.448–50) and Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* respectively. Formalism of Socrates, Kant juxtaposed: 1.388, 3.424.

¹¹³ There is very little on Hegel and the minor Socratics. One exception is my 2014 on Hegel and Antisthenes.

¹¹⁴ *PR* §§138, 279R; cf. *LP* 2.90 (Plato’s *Timaeus* treats the liver as a kind of inner oracle). Hegel does not really acknowledge the appeal of oracles long past Socrates, down to a Marcus Aurelius (*Meditations* 9.27) or Aelius Aristides, for example.

¹¹⁵ Peloponnesian War and Socrates’ ‘thinking consciousness’: *LP* 1.390. ‘Ruin of Greek life’: *LP* 1.421; cf. 2.109, 2.113, *LH* 271.

the youth and not believing in the city's gods become the single 'crime' of undermining Greek *Sittlichkeit*. Of this, Hegel's Socrates was both guilty and not guilty. At the more local level, his *daimonion* and proto-conscience was a new god, ushering in a new devotion to thought and 'inward certainty'. In evangelizing this, Socrates *did* corrupt the youth, for his dialectic alienated them from parental authority, thus weakening familial piety—'the substantial key-note of the Athenian state'.¹¹⁶ From their perspective, therefore, traditionalists were right to condemn Socrates for undermining family, religion, art, the city, and all the sanctity of ancestral *nomos*. Aristophanes, in particular, shows great 'depth' of insight as he condemns Socratism and 'Socrates' for scorning Zeus, teaching reverence for new gods of subjective will and cogitation, and alienating Pheidippides from his father. Many aspects of *Clouds* may be unhistorical (Hegel acknowledges) and the ending an 'exaggeration', but as a whole it brilliantly captures the negativity inherent in Socrates' dialectic.¹¹⁷ Blind to this, Tennemann rails at Aristophanes for vilifying, and the democracy for executing, a good man. Hegel for his part insists that Socrates was guilty as charged, and that Aristophanes was 'perfectly right'.¹¹⁸ On the other hand, Socrates was not simply a Sophist in that his peculiarly objective subjectivism held the seeds for a new, universal mentality: a revolutionary advance invisible to more traditionalist contemporaries like Aristophanes.

Innovator versus traditionalists, truth-seeker versus complacent mob, even proto-modern conscience versus customary *polis*: at one level for Hegel, Socrates' trial involves all these. More deeply, the trial represents the inner split within the Greek spirit itself: here 'the popular mind of Athens (*der Volksgeist Athens*)...rose against the principle which had become fatal to it'.¹¹⁹ Greece had given birth to Socrates, but in the end the mother turned fatally upon her fatal son, and both perished by the other's hand. This is a paraphrase of what Hegel terms 'the tragedy of Athens, the tragedy of Greece', and his comments on the various 'acts' of this drama can be grafted more systematically onto his tripartite analysis of tragedy. First, the substantial life of the democratic, free *polis* cast forth sparks of subjective consciousness—in lyric poetry, drama, Sophistic thought, and most of all Socrates himself. He steps forth from the

¹¹⁶ LP 1.440; cf. 1.436–7 (Xenophon's testimony that Socrates alienated Anytus' son from his father).

¹¹⁷ LP 1.430.

¹¹⁸ LP 1.427.

¹¹⁹ LP 1.432; cf. 1.447 ('all were implicated; the crime was one that the spirit of the people committed against itself').

'substantial' chorus, both other to it in his heroic thinking, yet also thoroughly Greek in his free individuality and his drive to know himself objectively. This rational 'passion' drives him into inevitable conflict with the other protagonist and 'power': the hallowed customs of family and religion. Moments of the 'divine' whole, both sides are partially right, and so they stubbornly insist on their rights and their innocence, though in fact both are equally guilty of one-sidedness. The penalty for both is death: Socrates is executed, and in the next generations the Greek *polis* too, and its uncritical *Sittlichkeit*, will dissolve before the Socratic critiques of Plato, Diogenes, and others. The Athenians were said to have later regretted their decision, and condemned Anytus. This (for Hegel) is 'the last act in this drama'—the posthumous reconciliation within those who look down on the tragedy with the clearer vision of distance. The posthumous acquittal is the final sign that the conflict was not one of sheer opposition: the self-determining *polis* and the self-determining individual are particularizations of the one Idea, in an objective and subjective key, respectively. Socrates was fully Athenian, the Athenians crypto-Socratic: Socrates patriotically obeyed the laws yet examined their ground; the Athenians defended them blindly, yet were themselves 'corrupted' by the new freedom, secretly enthralled by Socrates, Euripides, and Sophistic free-thinkers. It is this inner affinity that makes the conflict tragic, and because Athens was the 'centre' of Greece both geographically and culturally, its tragedy becomes a Panhellenic one.¹²⁰

Indeed, it is a world-historical tragedy, if the Fate governing nations hovers in the background. That it does is suggested in the following passage, where Hegel discusses Socrates in language he typically reserves for liminal, world-historical figures like Alexander, Caesar, and Napoleon:

In general history we find that this is the position of the heroes through whom a new world commences, and whose principle stands in contradiction to what has gone before and disintegrates it: they appear to be violently destroying the laws. Hence individually they are vanquished, but it is only the individual, and not the principle, which is negated in punishment, and the spirit of the Athenian people did not in the removal of the individual, recover its old position. The false form of individuality is taken away, and

¹²⁰ Socrates' trial as 'the universally moral and tragic fate, the tragedy of Athens, the tragedy of Greece': *LP* 1.446–7. Geographical 'centre': 1.169. Spiritual centre, where Anaxagoras unified the 'substantialist' outlook of Ionia (and its 'Oriental' hinterland) with the critical outlook of the Pythagorean-Eleatic west: 1.322 (cf. Diogenes Laertius 1.13).

that, indeed, in a violent way, by punishment; but the principle itself will penetrate later, if in another form, and elevate itself into a form of the world-spirit. This universal mode in which the principle comes forth and permeates the present is the true one; what was wrong was the fact that the principle came forth only as the peculiar possession of one individual. His own world could not comprehend Socrates, but posterity can, in as far as it stands above both. (LP 1.444)

The analysis is reminiscent also of Jesus Christ. Socrates and Jesus have long been juxtaposed: products of traditional cultures that could not understand or endure them, both were killed for a narrow justice, yet the broader principles they embodied survived—and thrived, as the inner truth of their, and of all, times. For Hegel, the particularity of their merely natural persons (the ‘false form of individuality’) *had* to be shuffled off for the spirit to be spread and individualized in many others.¹²¹ The concluding prophecy in Plato’s *Apology* hints at these spiritual descendants of Socrates; in Hegel’s paraphrase, the Socratic principle ‘penetrates’ the culture more broadly. In this, Socrates’ death marks ‘a great historic turning point’: all subsequent thinkers will be Socratics as they too subject experience to the tribunal of thought; at the same time, the life and death that was so ‘effectual in the kingdom of Thought’, and that had its own veritable Pentecost, seems to look forward to the fullness of that freedom in Christ, the turning point of history itself.¹²²

In German history, the great turning point is Luther—when ‘the introversion of Spirit begins (Socrates–Luther)’.¹²³ With extreme concision, Hegel offers this even more distant comparison between Periclean Athens and Reformation Germany: in the face of the less reflective life of the

¹²¹ Shelley’s statement that Socrates was the ‘Jesus Christ of Greece’ (*Epipsychidion* 33) has variations in Hamann, Eberhard, Priestley, Keats, Byron, and many contemporaries. The pair are a constant presence in Hegel’s early ‘theological’ essays (Leonard 2012: 65–104) and Enlightenment authors (Steffes 2016: 268–76; cf. Hodgson, *LR* 3.244 n.215). Wilson traces the pairing back to Justin Martyr (2007: 141–69), but it was Erasmus most of all who made the ‘philosophy of Christ’ the culmination of both Socratic and Judaic traditions (see Eden 2001: 8–9). Hegel follows this veritable *communis opinio*, finding in Christianity fulfilment of the Socratic tenet that ‘the soul of the individual is an absolute end’ (LP 2.114), with a freedom above heteronomous *nomoi* or Decalogues. Wenley 2002 [1889] stresses more the novelty of Christianity—an approach contextualized by J. Taylor’s informative essay (2007: 75).

¹²² Socrates’ prophecy: Plato *Apology* 39c–d. ‘Turning point’, ‘kingdom’: LP 1.447–8; cf. 1.407–8 with language of the Incarnation.

¹²³ *LH* 346. St Augustine has been called the ‘first modern man’ (e.g. Chadwick 1986: 4), but in linking Socrates spiritually with Luther, Hegel would push the seeds of modern subjectivity back further—back indeed to Anaxagoras.

Classical *polis* or late medieval Christendom, Greek philosopher and German monk bravely initiate a new autonomy; both stand firm before the threats of established powers; both suffer personally, but in the end triumph spiritually, for Socrates' identity of thinker-Good and Luther's stress on the Christ within were (for the Lutheran Hegel) destined to take root wherever it counted. On the other hand, the Thirty Years War was (in this narrative) hardly a tragic conflict despite the 'utter desolation' it wrought. Its destruction was 'exclusively of a political nature', for truth and right were all on one side, as Gustavus Adolphus ('that hero of the North of glorious memory') valiantly held out against the hordes that Catholic Europe flooded into Germany, zealous to quench the 'right of inwardness'.¹²⁴ Luther's shattering of Christendom, therefore, is for Hegel far less melancholy an affair than the Socratic ruin of fair Greece.

5.2.3. Plato

Whether Plato had a 'system', unwritten or otherwise, has been controversial.¹²⁵ Hegel for his part regards Plato as unsystematic, yet groping towards the elements of the true system. As a disciple of Socrates, Hegel's Plato first explicitly asserts the idealistic principle that reality is thought¹²⁶—specifically in the proposition that nature and thinking are bound up in the Idea of the Good. Plato is also the first to really adumbrate the logic-nature-spirit triad that would be yet more apparent in Aristotle, be explicitly formulated by the Stoics, and enshrined as fundamental by Wolff, Kant, and Hegel, for whom it becomes immanent in the whole tradition hitherto.¹²⁷ Hegel's retrospective discernment of the *rudiments* of system in Plato will be revisited by Zeller and others, but emphatically denied by Whitehead, for whom 'the wealth of ideas scattered' through Plato's dialogues,

his personal endowments, his wide opportunities for experience at a great period of civilization, his inheritance of an intellectual tradition not yet

¹²⁴ LH 434.

¹²⁵ Studies of Hegel and Plato include Foster 1965 [1935], Kümmel 1968, S. Rosen 1989: 83–106, Inwood 1984, Browning 2012.

¹²⁶ LP 2.1.

¹²⁷ Universal triad, 'always found': LP 2.243. Implicit perhaps in Plato: 1.387, 2.48–9.

stiffened by excessive systematization, have made his writing an inexhaustible mine of suggestion.¹²⁸

Directly opposed to this more diffuse Plato is the 'metaphysical' bogeyman of Nietzsche and Heidegger who (they claim) froze thinking into a stiff dogmatism. Hegel bridges these views, in that he regards Plato as a Greek—and therefore more aesthetic thinker than systematic 'scientist'. For him (as for Whitehead), Plato was a man of comprehensive *Bildung*: descendant of Solon and the Athenian king Codrus, relation of Critias, friend of Socrates, wrestler, youthful poet and tragedian, scholar of Eleatics, Pythagoreans, Heraclitus, and various Sophists, associate of mathematicians like Theodorus, Archytas, and Philolaus—this Plato synthesized and transformed all the major insights of the Greek philosophical tradition, indeed of Greek culture generally.¹²⁹ But unlike Whitehead, Hegel will not seek in Plato an eclectic 'wealth' of stimulating ideas.¹³⁰ Instead, his singular Idea will make its first appearance here, not in Germanic system but in a more diffuse, Greek guise—a series of separate, beautiful dialogues.

That Plato chose dialogues reflects on Socrates' own practice, on Athenian outdoor culture, on the Greek admiration of the word (*logos*) and, more broadly still, their aesthetic spirit. For the dialogue-form, Hegel implies, is an aesthetic presentation of ideas, and with the 'melodious speech' of its eloquent characters, Plato's compositions are particularly beautiful and powerful.¹³¹ Indeed, they are 'indubitably... the fairest gifts which fate has preserved from the ages that are gone' and Hegel even speaks of the 'Platonic rage for beauty', a phrase that recalls the soul's *erōs* in *Phaedrus* more than Winckelmann's aestheticism.¹³² But Hegel does not elaborate on how Ideas might shine through the dialogues' scenes, characters, and images to be grasped almost as sensuous presences—as 'ideal' in Hegel's sense. Their beauty enigmatic, the dialogues are also discrete productions, bafflingly indirect, internally diverse, 'many-sided'.¹³³ They mix together all manner of considerations, making it difficult to extract doctrines

¹²⁸ Whitehead 1957 [1929]: 53. Zeller: 'Although Plato's philosophy is nowhere transmitted as a systematic whole... it is only in the form of a system that any account of it can be given' (1980 [1883]: 126; cf. 293); cf. Shorey 1903, Joseph 1948. Karamanolis powerfully argues that the Whiteheadian approach is correct (2006: 10–11); both approaches have ancient precedents, however, with Antiochus first imposing the triadic Stoic system on Plato (11–14).

¹²⁹ LP 2.11–13, 2.96.

¹³⁰ Contrast LP 2.13 with the quoted passage of Whitehead's *Process and Reality*.

¹³¹ LP 2.14; cf. 2.17 (beauty, power) and 2.134 (conversational, cultured tone).

¹³² LP 2.45 ('*Mania* des Schönen'). 'Gifts': 2.9. ¹³³ LP 2.10.

(as one can with Cicero's more monological dialogues), or abstract 'what Plato thought'.¹³⁴ Indeed, the very plurality of styles and topics in the dialogues appeals to different readers differently, and challenges every reader on many fronts.¹³⁵ The beautiful introductions, compelling characters, and flowing eloquence attract all those many who enjoy drifting through the meadows of Plato's poetry and bright 'elevated thoughts'. Only the steely few venture into the 'thorns and thistles' of *Parmenides* or *Philebus*. Hence the 'inmost reality and true greatness of Platonic philosophy' has remained a secret from most, particularly in modern times when readers read their own presuppositions into Plato and recoil from his speculative depths as from some 'empty subtleties'.¹³⁶ It is as if the dialogues' beauty both allures readers to and seduces them from philosophy.

Such remarks on Plato as an 'artist' of thought, so congenial to Pater, Wilde, and even contemporary Platonic scholars, contributed also to debates in Hegel's time. Schleiermacher's 1804 translation of Plato was lauded by August Böckh and others as an 'artistic' triumph commensurate with Plato's philosophical artistry—and with the unique capacity of German and Germans to comprehend Greek and the Greeks.¹³⁷ On the other hand, Schleiermacher's translation re-stimulated debates over whether Plato had an 'unwritten' or 'esoteric' metaphysics. Hegel's stance on this is somewhat equivocal. He quotes with seeming approval the argument of Brandis (then professor of philosophy at Bonn) that Plato did formulate ideas in more systematic form, that Aristotle had a copy (now lost) of these *agrapha dogmata* about the Good, these 'dogmatic expositions of Ideas'.¹³⁸ Yet when Tennemann ventures a similar claim, Hegel dismisses it with scorn: no one can *fully* hide or disguise his inner thoughts, for what is internal will shine out, particularly in the case of philosophical ideas, which follow their

¹³⁴ *LP* 2.11–12; cf. 2.15–6 for praise of how Homer, Thucydides, and Plato objectively record and describe their characters and phenomena. In Plato's case, this is 'urbanity': allowing and welcoming free opinions in the other.

¹³⁵ Hegel adduces the *Phaedo*, 'elevating and beautiful' at the beginning and end, dialectical in the middle, as a dialogue in which 'very many mental qualities are called into play': a far cry from Mendelssohn's Wolffian version (*LP* 2.55).

¹³⁶ *LP* 2.19. 'Thorns': 2.55. 'Inmost reality': 2.68.

¹³⁷ For these associations, see Lamm 2000: 207–8, 222–8. They linger on in characterizations of Plato as 'an artist, though a philosophic artist' (Zeller 1876: 506) and as 'that artist in thought' (Wilde 2003 [1891], Chapter 3).

¹³⁸ Brandis's *De Perditis Aristotelis Libris*: *LP* 2.11. 'Dogmatic expositions': 2.56. Tennemann's *System of Plato's Philosophy* appeared in 1792–5; cf. Tigerstedt 1974: 5–6, 57–69 for an informative summary of Brucker, Tiedemann, and Tennemann on Plato. Nikulin 2012 surveys later theories for and against an 'esoteric' Plato; Krämer 1990 sums up the Tübingen interpretation.

own logical progression, demand expression adequate to themselves, and in all *possess* rather than are possessed by the thinker.¹³⁹ The union of essence and appearance lies behind this rejection of any sharp divide between esoteric and exoteric in Plato. And in fact Hegel does regard the dialectical dialogues (*Parmenides*, *Sophist*, *Philebus*) as constituting the 'inmost reality' of Plato: 'esoteric' only because they remain inaccessible to 'those who have not sufficient interest in it to exert themselves'.¹⁴⁰ On the other hand, an esoteric *system* would be an anachronism, for though Plato wavers between popular and more purely philosophical conceptions,¹⁴¹ he was, with his aesthetic Greek consciousness, not ready for systematic science. Such scattered remarks do not, of course, anticipate all the theories about Plato's thought and dialogues—the relation of the two, their unity and development, their degree of systematicity, the presence or absence of 'esoteric' doctrines, their dogmatic or dialogical character. Nevertheless, they do touch upon this complex of issues with a consistency of vision. Hegel's Plato, *qua* philosopher, offers through his many dialogues an outlook whose implicit idealism becomes more apparent through its temporal evolution, and is therefore most explicit in 'late' dialogues like *Parmenides*—and even more so in the complete Neoplatonic synthesis. More concisely still: the monism of the Idea implicit in Plato's dialogues emerges into the light of system only gradually, through the continued mediation of later thinkers, Platonic and otherwise, from Aristotle to Proclus.

The search for a completed system in Plato's philosophical artistry is one category mistake. Another is the 'hypercriticism' of philologists (represented by Schleiermacher) who try to distinguish genuine dialogues from spurious: since antiquity it has been clear (Hegel claims) which dialogues are important, and the real task is to determine their precise significance. Mistaken also are attempts to revive religious Platonism, whose enthusiasm for transcendence modernity has outgrown. Here the Platonic myths that fascinated a Blake, Schelling, or Hölderlin do not impress Hegel as any needed 'mythology of reason'. A Hellenophile grown old, he demystifies Plato's myths: like all myths, expressions of a less evolved mentality, these narratives may convey something of higher ideas via the sensuous imagination, but in doing so cannot educate hearers to free thought.¹⁴² Hegel would therefore read the myths like the dialogues themselves: pierce their beautiful surfaces to the *pure* concepts within. The allegory of the Cave thus becomes an exhortation

¹³⁹ LP 2.10. ¹⁴⁰ LP 2.68. ¹⁴¹ LP 2.16–17.

¹⁴² Hypercriticism, religious Platonism: LP 2.10. Myths: 2.18–20.

to grasp the Idea, without any trace of otherworldly dualism; the images of *Phaedo* are just a 'popular philosophy', containing no real consolation for the reader, for like Homer's Achilles 'he would prefer to be a ploughboy on the earth' than enjoy the afterlife pictured in *that* final myth.¹⁴³ Thus, while Hegel approves in principle of allegorical approaches (of Neoplatonists for instance), he is not much detained by any one extended *allegorēsis*.

Neoplatonist readings can construe each detail—narrative frame, characters, arguments, myths—as contributing to the *skopos* unifying the dialogue, while each dialogue in turn contributes to students' progress towards the One: the typical curriculum began with *Alcibiades I* and ended with *Parmenides*. Schleiermacher also focuses on the dialogue's internal unity and orders them according to their alleged artistry, as successive pedagogical steps towards higher understanding.¹⁴⁴ For his part, Hegel will discuss the dialogues as they seem to most answer to the Logic–Nature–Spirit triad. The right beginning, therefore, is to understand what the Platonic ideas are. The empirical understanding takes Ideas as substantial entities transcending consciousness, in some metaphysical beyond; or as properties, i.e. universals abstracted from perceived things. But for Plato (Hegel reminds us), sense experience has a weak, shadowy reality and empirical abstractions from it are proportionately not ultimate. Plato's Ideas may, alternatively, be construed on the analogy of Kant's regulative Ideas of World, Soul, and God. But these *a priori*, unrealizable grounds of unity are both more immediate and less immanent than the Platonic Ideas which, though 'recollected' only gradually, are yet not 'thrust away behind Nature' into a metaphysical beyond but remain bound to phenomena (through processes of 'participation' and 'imitation') as their cause and inner intelligibility. This epistemological, ontological, and causal priority of the Ideas leads Hegel to interpret them in terms of his own concrete universal: the universal Platonic Idea generates and includes the particulars of which it can be predicated; it is the source of their being and intelligibility; it is the 'truth' by and for which they persist.¹⁴⁵

In psychology too, Hegel finds great insight in Plato's concrete universals. The object of knowledge is Ideas, and therefore the doctrine of recollection

¹⁴³ Piercing surface to Ideas: *LP* 2.19–20, 35–6. Allegory of Cave: 2.27. Achilles as 'ploughboy': 1.443 (cf. Homer *Odyssey* 11.489–91).

¹⁴⁴ On Schleiermacher's notion of the unity and order of the dialogues, see Lamm 2000: 224–5.

¹⁴⁵ *LP* 2.28–31. For a complementary, monistic interpretation of Platonic ideas (with reference to Bosanquet), see Dunham et al. 2011: 19–24.

looks past views of learning as the mechanical impressing or filling of the mind from outside, and understands it rather as a process of self-mediation: through the Socratic dialogue, the mind thinks over its contents (e.g. popular opinions, hypotheses) and so makes the implicit explicit; the mind is not informed from the outside but 'recollects' its own thoughts in their essentiality.¹⁴⁶ The Platonic dialogues thus illustrate how virtue is not teachable from without, how Ideas must be 'remembered' from within, how 'the soul is somehow all things', and how 'the spirit of man contains reality in itself'.¹⁴⁷ Hegel's Plato thus anticipates the Neoplatonist identity between *nous* and *noēta*, but the slippage may be more egregious when Hegel construes Platonic Ideas as prototypes of his Absolute, uniting subject and object in a supreme self-knowledge: such Platonic phrases as 'the really real' are confidently translated as the 'absolute', and Hegel blithely equates the 'energy and enthusiasm' of seeing Ideas *above* the soul with the serenity of a mind contemplating its *own* universal contents.¹⁴⁸ Thus the mystical vision limned in *Symposium*, *Phaedrus*, and *Republic*, with its lightning glimpse into wonders half known, is construed as the 'self-mediating unity of consciousness and reality'.¹⁴⁹ This uncompounded unity of thinker-thought is also (allegedly) the true meaning of the doctrine of immortality: Hegel's Plato did not assert life after death or anything as naïve as Egyptian metempsychosis, nor did he conceive of soul as a thing or substance to which the predicate 'immortal' could be tacked, as in the Wolffian metaphysics of Mendelssohn's *Phaedo*. Rather, Platonic language of soul as the self-moving origin of motion makes it an 'element in Mind', which remains itself through the changes it initiates and sustains: soul reflects Spirit's powers to determine itself and all else. In all these ways, Platonic psychology can boldly claim the 'pride of science' in a way that should startle modern empiricists, Kantians, and scholars. For them, the long passage of time has made Plato's texts seem innocuous or respectable, when in fact he asserts man's essential oneness with God.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Learning as 'filling an empty space' or etching a *tabula rasa*: LP 2.33; cf. 2.44–5. Plato too may sideline such merely popular metaphors: wisdom does not flow like wine between vessels (*Symposium* 174d–e), the mind is not like an aviary (*Theaetetus* 196d–200d), and knowledge is not 'implanted as sight into blind eyes' (*Republic* 518c).

¹⁴⁷ LP 2.32. 'Learning is just a recollection of what we already possess': 2.33.

¹⁴⁸ 'Really real' as 'absolute': e.g. LP 2.40 referring to *Phaedrus* 247c (*ousia ontōs ousa*). 'Enthusiasm': 2.22, 2.40.

¹⁴⁹ LP 2.22.

¹⁵⁰ Immortality: LP 2.42. Metempsychosis: 2.37. Mendelssohn: 2.55. Soul an element in Spirit: 2.36. 'Pride of science', God: 2.22; cf. 2.80.

Plato's alleged absolute idealism emerges over the span of his corpus, beginning with the 'two modes of consciousness' in the Divided Line, which Hegel interprets with much learned detail. The Divided Line subordinates sensation to non-empirical thought—i.e. 'what is thought in the soul itself'.¹⁵¹ Within the latter, mathematical *dianoia* (*Verstand*) are inferior to *noēsis*, *logos*, or *Vernunft*, which moves from Idea to pure Idea until it reaches the first principle, the *anhupotheton* or that which 'which is in and for itself'.¹⁵² Such intimations of the presuppositionless Concept, in which each thought-determination implies and is the others, inspire Hegel to locate here the first 'part' of the system towards which Plato was groping. The 'true' philosophical triad of logic–nature–spirit allows the historian to carve up Plato's corpus along its natural joints: dialectic, philosophy of nature, and philosophy of mind, represented best by *Parmenides*, *Timaeus*, and *Republic*, respectively. Together these make up the 'whole Platonic system of philosophy'.¹⁵³

Ontological and dialectical logic is at the centre of philosophy for Hegel, and in this regard nobody in his antiquity (or modernity) surpasses Plato. The Sophists' subjective dialectic tended to do little more than demonstrate how empirical things and concepts can be P and ~P, depending on perspective. Socrates moved beyond the merely eristic exposure of appearances and beliefs as subjectively contingent, but his own dialectic still remained at the same level of 'mere reasoning...from individual points of view'.¹⁵⁴ This low-level dialectic remains tied to natural experience, whose spatio-temporal contents are discrete and hence bound by the principle of non-contradiction: the table may be big and small, Simmias tall and short, but not in the same sense, part, time, or perspective. Contradictory qualities determine them in turn, and they cannot be said truly to be both P and ~P. Yet if subjective dialectic thus 'always holds the opposites asunder', it nevertheless represents a rudimentary attempt to think opposites as aspects of a single, complex reality.¹⁵⁵ It graduates to its truer form in Plato's Divided Line, *Parmenides*, *Sophist*, and *Philebus*, which explore Ideas as unifying opposites and hence as instances of the concrete universal that

¹⁵¹ LP 2.46.

¹⁵² LP 2.47. Hegel's *Verstand–Vernunft* (here *Denken–reine Denken*) distinction revisits Plato's *dianoia–noēsis*, Aristotle's *epistēmē–nous*, medieval *ratio–intellectus*, and Descartes's discursive reasoning versus indubitable insights (*Regulae* VII); cf. Inwood 1999: 242–4.

¹⁵³ LP 2.49; cf. 2.38, 71.

¹⁵⁴ LP 2.52–3.

¹⁵⁵ LP 2.63–4. Analogous are analyses of the 'sophistry of perception' (*PS* §130 with Houlgate 2013: 55–6) and of 'mere sophistry' (*EL* §81A2 with W. Dudley 2003: 99–100).

'rules, penetrates, and produces the particular and manifold'. There the Platonic dialectic of Ideas is 'objective' in that it unifies thinking and 'objective' being within thinking itself. As such, it 'forms an epoch in the history of Philosophy, and hence in the history of the world'.¹⁵⁶

Three works are milestones in this world-historical 'way up' from natural sensation to spiritual thinking. In *Parmenides* ('masterpiece of Platonic dialectic'), Parmenides advises the young Socrates to practise deducing consequences from opposite hypotheses: If A, then X follows; if ~A, then Y. Alluding to the eight deductions as well as the dialogue's closing sentence, Hegel associates the procedure with his own: each hypothesis or thought-determination is 'turned round into the opposite of itself', as if Plato's 'main endeavour is to show that in every determination the opposite is contained', and so to prove that One and Many, sameness and difference, rest and motion, Being and non-Being are mutually implicative. Indeed, the dialogue is so austere, the characters entering so thoroughly into the ideas discussed, that it is as if the ideas *themselves* make 'themselves the other of themselves'. *Parmenides* is thus not to be misconstrued as sophistical, pedantic, or irrational. Nor is it an oddity in the Platonic corpus, but 'contains the pure Platonic doctrine of Ideas' and was rightly revered by Neoplatonists as 'the true theology'. On the other hand, as an ancient upon the 'way up', Hegel's Plato does not overcome the great dualisms in a fully concrete way.¹⁵⁷

Still, the other two dialectical dialogues do make some progress in differentiating the One concretely. The *Sophist* (in Hegel's reading) begins by critiquing Sophistic dialectic. Again, their typical practice is to argue that any phenomenal entity (e.g. a table) accommodates opposite determinations (bigness, smallness), is therefore contradictory (both big and small), and that consequently no determination is objective. All is relative to subjective perspective. But this 'false dialectic' proves nothing more remarkable than the co-presence or succession of different relative qualities; it does not demonstrate a unity of true opposites. A second target of the dialogue is Eleatic monism—here analysed as the deeper ground of Sophistic relativism. For the proposition 'only Being is' implies that falsehood (the articulation of what is not) is impossible; that therefore all statements are true; and hence that all *my* statements are true. Thus, seemingly 'innocent' Eleaticism

¹⁵⁶ LP 2.53.

¹⁵⁷ 'Masterpiece': LP 2.56. Mutual entailment, 'other of themselves': 2.58. 'Pure doctrine': 2.59. 'True theology': 2.60. Dualisms: 2.62.

actually harbours a destructive voluntarism: the impersonal Eleatic One evolves into the shifting ego of the Sophistic Absolute. Demonstrating the inner unity of Eleatic substance and Sophistic subject is a dialectical feat in itself, but the greater triumphs of the dialogue (in Hegel's remarkable interpretation) are its more explicit conclusions concerning categories of being, unity, and motion. Here, *pace* Parmenides, it is not the case that Being simply is, that non-Being simply is not, without inner determination or mutual relation. Rather, Being and non-Being imply and pervade each other, as do unity and multiplicity, self-identity and otherness. This unity of opposites illustrates the Sophist's demand that true Being be not without 'movement, life, soul, and thought',¹⁵⁸ and here the writer of *SL* can only quote with approval the Sophist's statement that 'thought is the union of ideas'.¹⁵⁹ In particular, thought unifies the principles of Being and non-Being: far from being the impossibility of sheer nothingness, non-Being becomes difference, otherness, or negation, and to understand an entity is to grasp it for what it is *and* what it is not, in itself and in its relations to others. The Eleatic tautology, 'A is A' therefore graduates to the true judgment 'A is B', the logical *Urteil* expressing the universal identity-in-difference. In this, Plato's *Sophist* anticipates Spinoza's fundamental dictum, *omnis determinatio est negatio*.¹⁶⁰

The oppositions running through Hegel's *Philebus*—pleasure and wisdom, the infinite and the finite, or unlimited and limiting—are ontologically even more determinate. The ethical conclusion of the dialogue is that wisdom, as the principle of limitation that draws distinctions and sets finite determinations on the infinite, should abstract an order of legitimate pleasures from an infinite array of possibilities. When wisdom is thus conjoined with pleasure, the result is the 'perfect good' of the best life: abstract concepts like the infinite turn out to be the most determinative empirically, and Platonic dialectic evolves 'Ideas' as concrete universals. Even more brilliant is the dialogue's fourfold distinction of the unlimited (pleasure), limit or measure (wisdom), their union, and the cause of this union. This last notion, Hegel wonders, seems to articulate the true notion of God as the unitive cause—both finite and infinite, harmonizing measure and indeterminacy into a well-formed cosmos. Such a cause would have to be Spirit, for only thought has the power to embrace and keep together the most strenuous contradictions, while physical bodies must lose one quality as they take on

¹⁵⁸ *LP* 2.63, with Plato *Sophist* 246–9.

¹⁵⁹ *LP* 2.64, quoting Plato *Sophist* 259e.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. *EL* §§91–2.

its opposite. In sum, *Parmenides* and *Sophist* occupy the acme of ancient dialectic and demonstrate the 'inmost reality and true greatness of Platonic philosophy', as it begins to demonstrate the unity of fundamental categories. *Philebus* goes even further: its thoughts on unifying the finite and infinite anticipate Hegel's understanding of the true infinite; its proof that universals determine natural actualities like feelings anticipates Hegel's transition from logic to nature, and as such is more objectively insightful than the sterile antinomies of Kant's transcendental dialectic.¹⁶¹

The notion that the Platonic Ideas are ontologically determinative also guides Hegel's reading of Plato's philosophy of nature and man. A favourite text of his Tübingen circle, of Schelling and the Romantics, with its doctrine of the world-soul pervading a beautiful cosmos, the *Timaeus* suggests to an older Hegel 'the Idea ... in concrete determinateness'.¹⁶² The first concrete form is its God as world-maker, who free from jealousy moulds a world to mirror the paradigm's perfection: in Hegel's less metaphorical language, the logical Concept 'overreaches' the seeming 'otherness' of nature. Again, the Platonic Demiurge looks to the Forms to shape the cosmos as an ensouled being, self-sufficient animal that includes all other animals within itself: for Hegel, analogously, the (planet) Earth is the first, 'universal' organism that abstractly engenders and contains all particular ones.¹⁶³ Again, the Demiurge implanted *nous* in soul, and soul in body, and so 'created the world as a blessed god', *monogenēs* and unique of its kind. Yet where for Plato this 'visible god' is a derivative image of a higher and *therefore* less perfect, it is for Hegel deduced and *therefore* more complex. In this inversion of values, Hegel would have Plato move from the abstract to the concrete—with the result that nature, 'this newly-begotten god... is the true absolute'.¹⁶⁴

The ingredients of the Platonic *cosmos*—world-soul and elemental matter—also partake in its concrete unity of opposites. The world-soul emerges as the fusion of eternal and changeable, 'same' and 'other', or in Hegel's terms as 'the identity of the identical and non-identical'.¹⁶⁵ Even more ingenious is Plato's construction of the 'absolute' harmony of the

¹⁶¹ *Philebus* discussed: LP 2.68–70; cf. EL §95A (true infinite as 'unity of the infinite and the finite', with reference to *Philebus* 23–38). Transition to nature: 2.70.

¹⁶² LP 2.71. For the *Timaeus*' importance to Schelling, see Sallis 1999: 155–67, Beierwaltes 2002.

¹⁶³ EN §338.

¹⁶⁴ Platonic *cosmos* as blessed god: *Timaeus* 34b; cf. 30c–31a, 92c. 'True absolute': LP 2.78–9.

¹⁶⁵ LP 2.80; cf. EL §92A.

elements. In Hegel's interpretation of the ratio $a:b::b:c$ —the ratio (*ἀναλογία*) by which numbers constitute the triangles that constitute the elements—the mean term (b) not only unites the extremes, but 'becomes' them, and they it, so that 'having come to be the same, everything will be one'. The situation is analogous to Hegel's view of logical judgment and syllogism, where extreme terms and premises are conjoined and so 'identified' by copula or minor premise, respectively. Plato's elemental ratio, therefore, is effectively a spatial extension of judgment, featuring a 'distinction which is no distinction'.¹⁶⁶ Less paradoxically, difference subsists within an overall unity, and Hegel at least seems satisfied that Platonic matter embodies the trinitarian Absolute, remarking that its 'separation and unifying of differences, is the living God'.¹⁶⁷ Since matter, mortal souls, and the world-soul are ultimately constructed from the same mathematically harmonious 'stuff', the shared structure of these unities-in-difference make possible the harmony or correspondence that is knowledge. Thus, despite the many 'childlike', opaque, and downright 'confused' moments, the *Timaeus* harbours some 'very deep perceptions' that impress Hegel as fundamentally richer than those of contemporary mechanical physics.¹⁶⁸ Plato was concerned with the problem central to German Idealism: thinking Nature in such a way as to make it both ground and intelligible object of thinking.

The idealism that sees intelligibility pervading the very 'stuff' of nature has a counterpart in the ideal politics of the *Republic*: truly a work of Spirit, as it draws on both dialectic and natural philosophy to derive a political order from the timeless order of the Good. In Hegel's detailed reading, Plato's *kallipolis* becomes an incarnation of the Idea as, animated by a single principle, it differentiates itself organically into its constituent parts: property laws, family arrangements, classes, constitution, and foreign relations all are shaped by, express, and actualize the whole.¹⁶⁹ Onto Plato's trio of classes and psychological faculties, Hegel works to graft his own logical triad: the workers' desire aims at particulars, the Guardians' reason deals with universal Ideas, while the Auxiliaries' spiritedness or 'anger' is the middle term, a stubborn subjectivity 'directed against the objective... the freedom which turns back within itself and acts negatively'.¹⁷⁰ Ideal also, and not at all arbitrary, is the foundational analogy between 'large' and 'small' letters of

¹⁶⁶ LP 2.74 (quoting, interpreting *Timaeus* 31b–32b).

¹⁶⁷ Matter and 'God': 2.76–7; cf. Sallis 2004: 31–3 on Hegel's Aristotelian interpretation of the Platonic receptacle (*chōra*).

¹⁶⁸ Same stuff: LP 2.83. 'Deep perceptions': 2.87.

¹⁶⁹ LP 2.100.

¹⁷⁰ LP 2.106.

city and individual, suggesting as it does how the Idea overreaches, pervades and binds the 'atoms' of particular wills to the community as a whole. Plato's treatment of justice is also intuitively ideal. As the foundational virtue, without which the other virtues could not exist, justice in the *kallipolis* is not to be identified with merely abstract or positive law. Rather as the 'general and all-pervading quality' that evolves particular classes and harmonizes their free actions, it enacts the rational will's self-actualization as particular moments of social objectivity. Namely, Platonic justice ('minding one's own business') is 'mind in its striving to realize itself'.¹⁷¹ The reading is not obviously unfaithful to Plato and might well have integrated Plato's later definition of law as the 'distribution of mind'.¹⁷²

Because his idealism was insufficiently concrete, Plato makes many political errors, in Hegel's view. Like other Greeks, he does not appreciate the political necessity of family, free speech and thought, competition, luxury, crime. Dissociated from the Idea of Good, feared as sources of disunity, they are excessively circumscribed, and Plato's *kallipolis* takes on the unreal air of his still-abstract Ideas. Many readers dismiss it and its philosopher-kings as an unworldly 'chimera', while others associate it with the small and self-enclosed communities of world-fleeing 'Monks or Quakers'.¹⁷³ But Hegel turns this common prejudice against Platonic politics on its head. Far from being too idealistic, Plato's 'real deficiency consists in his not being ideal enough'.¹⁷⁴ What is rational is, and should become, actual: Plato's work errs in not doing enough to reshape political realities in the light of the Idea.

A similar deficiency marks his religion and aesthetics. *Phaedrus* 246d defines God as that in which soul and body, i.e. 'subjectivity and objectivity ... ideal and real', are thoroughly united in one nature, with finite body enveloped as it were by the infinite spirit. Plato here 'correctly' regards the body as finite and hence not 'adequate to the Idea', but in explaining the soul's embodiment, he lamely resorts to images of a 'fall' and 'degeneration', thus again illustrating the ancients' inability to grasp the 'transition from thought to body'.¹⁷⁵ Similarly with Plato's aesthetics: in looking 'up' to ground phenomenal beauties in the Idea, Plato 'seized the one true thought,

¹⁷¹ 'All-pervading quality': *LP* 2.104. Mind striving: 2.91.

¹⁷² Plato: *Laws* 714a1–2 (a pun on *nomos*, *nous*, and *dianomē*); cf. Aristotle *Politics* 1287a28–32, Julian 258a–262d, *LP* 2.108 ('reason ought to be the basis of law, and so it is, on the whole').

¹⁷³ *LP* 2.94–5; cf. 2.404 (critiquing Plotinus' proposed 'Platonopolis').

¹⁷⁴ *LP* 2.108; cf. 2.26 (Plato's goals are 'realized much more in modern states').

¹⁷⁵ Defining God: *LP* 2.39. 'Transition': 2.38.

that the essence of the beautiful is intellectual, the Idea of reason'.¹⁷⁶ Beautiful things are beautiful because they participate in the Idea—of Beauty: a near tautology that would need to be nuanced by the subsequent tradition up to Hegel's more concrete aesthetics. Of course, Hegel's reading does not *quite* capture what Socrates says in *Phaedrus*, where Beauty is the sole Idea that appears directly to the senses, leaving troubling memories and a restless *erōs* for its elusive radiance; or in *Symposium*, where glimpses of Beauty and its derivatives inspire varied forms of 'aesthetic' *poēsis*—the making of beautiful sciences, laws, children, as well as 'fine' arts. Ignoring such details for what he regards as Plato's *single* determinative intuition, Hegel ends his survey of Plato with aesthetics, and not with religion or philosophy—perhaps assuming this to be most appropriate for Plato, *qua* Greek and philosopher-artist.¹⁷⁷

Despite his shortcomings, Plato remains of superlative importance for Hegel. His Ideas, as the inner objects of the thinking mind, dialectically identical with any conceptual 'opposites', and capable of unfolding into the particularities of nature, the state, art—these Ideas prefigure Hegel's own concrete universal, as well as Aristotle's God and the Neoplatonic One. They also, theoretically, sum up the major insights of the Greek past, Pythagorean, Eleatic, Heraclitean, Sophistic, Socratic. But, like Parmenides and Pythagoras before him, Plato's main limitation lies in not being idealistic *enough*. Hence his dualistic language and the abstract nature of his Ideas (i.e. *chōrismos* of universal and particular), reflect the deficiencies of ancient thought at large, not yet able to realize the phenomenal as maximally ideal.

5.2.4. Aristotle

The relation of Plato and Aristotle, and the extent of their agreement, are ancient controversies.¹⁷⁸ Against those who like Coleridge and William James divide temperaments into the 'tender-minded', idealist, rationalist Platonists and 'hard-minded', pluralist, empiricist Aristotelians, Hegel varies the dominant Neoplatonic position that the two fundamentally agree, and

¹⁷⁶ *LP* 2.116; cf. *LA* 1.21–2.

¹⁷⁷ Hegel's ordering resurfaces in Zeller (who treats art second last, before *Laws*: 1876: 505–16) and Coplestone (1993: 253–9).

¹⁷⁸ Studies of Hegel and Aristotle include Weiss 1969, Ritter 1969, and especially Ferrarin 2004. For Weiss, 'on first looking into Hegel's Aristotle' reveals dimensions of Hegel, and 'also of the real Aristotle' (1969: xxvii), while Ferrarin tends to be more critical of Hegel's readings.

laments how teacher and student are still superficially contrasted as idealist and realist.¹⁷⁹ But where Neoplatonists often rank the more naturalistic Aristotle below the 'divine' Plato, Hegel fairly reverses the order of significance, arguing that the later thinker inherits and extends the earlier's work. Aristotle 'excels Plato in speculative depth' while also ranging more widely:¹⁸⁰ he unifies the Platonic Ideas into *the* Idea of the Self-thinking God, and treats numerous individual phenomena as self-mediating wholes—a truly concrete thinker. Though his idealism was *not* explicitly systematic,¹⁸¹ he combined metaphysical insight with scientific precision and so his synthesis makes him 'of all the ancients the most deserving of study', indeed 'one of the richest and deepest of all the scientific geniuses that have as yet appeared—a man whose like no later age has ever yet produced'.¹⁸² Aristotle's specific accomplishments in metaphysics, physics, psychology, and logic remain object-lessons for Hegel's own day. No ancient figure is as important for Hegel as Aristotle, and one can well appreciate why in his *Introduction to Hegel*, Mure dedicates six of fourteen chapters—the first third of the book—to Aristotle.¹⁸³

The importance of Aristotle to Hegel is underscored by his lengthy history of Aristotelian texts and studies. He relates the fortunes of Aristotle's private library, first bequeathed to Theophrastus, then to Neleus, then buried for 130 years before being dredged up again by Apellicon, carried by Sulla's victorious troops to Rome, given over to careless or uneducated copyists until after many centuries, it was finally entrusted to scientific philologists and the 'higher criticism', with 'all its ingenuity'.¹⁸⁴ In the meantime, from imperfect sources, Aristotle's ideas were interpreted by five successive groups of Aristotelians, each hampered by lack of texts and/or philosophical insight: Peripatetics of Cicero's time, Neoplatonists (or, equally justly, 'Neoaristotelians'), medieval Scholastics, Renaissance scholars, and later historians like Tennemann.¹⁸⁵ In the modern period

¹⁷⁹ 2.118–19. Dominant Neoplatonic view: Karamanolis 2006. Modern arguments for unity include Owen 1986: 200–20 and Gerson 2005.

¹⁸⁰ *LP* 2.119.

¹⁸¹ As with Plato, Hegel discerns in Aristotle the elements of system (metaphysics, nature, ethics) but not system itself: a more nuanced position than the 'myth' of a systematic Aristotle which Jaeger rejects (1968 [1934]).

¹⁸² *LP* 2.134, 2.117; cf. *LH* 272, and repeated, unbounded praise for *De Anima* as still the 'most admirable' (*LP* 2.203) and 'best' work in rational psychology (*EM* §377, a text emphasized by Weiss 1969: 3–4 and Ferrarin 2004: 25).

¹⁸³ Mure 1940: 1–51; cf. Stace 1955: 3–31.

¹⁸⁴ *LP* 2.126–8.

¹⁸⁵ Higher criticism: *LP* 2.127–8. Five receptions: 2.129–31; cf. 1.113, Ferrarin 2004: 83. The unnamed fourth group opposed Scholasticism, accompanied the rise of science, and saw a post-

too, philologists are reducing the deficit of texts, yet here, where 'one clever critic' is flatly opposed by 'another ingenious person', Hegel doubts whether Aristotle's corpus, so maltreated almost from the beginning, can ever be emended back to its pristine state. Nevertheless, he remains confident that Aristotle's *essential* outlook, both in outline and 'in many of its details', can now be fully understood for the first time, when readers have both the material sources and philosophical maturity to grasp Aristotle's achievement. Thus, despite Sullan depredations, partial misinterpretations, and the possibility that only 25 per cent of Aristotle's writings remain, nevertheless 'as far as the essentials are concerned, no such great harm has been done':¹⁸⁶ from broken fragments, *Wissenschaft* can reconstruct the whole.

Hegel's own 'scientific' history of Aristotle highlights two complementary facets of his specimen. First, Aristotle is the 'perfect empiricist' who examines phenomena, thoroughly, from all sides, as individuals and as parts of ever larger wholes.¹⁸⁷ And yet, though he proceeds by 'ordinary ratiocination', he arrives at 'the profoundest speculative Notion'.¹⁸⁸ This Hegel seems to associate with Aristotle's understanding of nature as 'the inner principle of change', which underlies his analyses of elemental motion, organisms, poetic genres, cities, and so forth, as they develop over time under the agency of an immanent final cause; this self-mediation towards actuality finds its perfect exemplification in Aristotle's God, the Self-Thinking Thought (*Noësis Noëseōs*). This God does not, it is true, individualize itself through history like Hegel's Idea, and Aristotle makes only tantalizing statements about its causal relation to temporal entities. Aristotle thus remains for Hegel an empiricist whose naïve idealism does not coalesce into a systematic whole. He only 'recognized the truth in the particular, or only a succession of particular truths', and even God is presented as just one particular among others, as if Aristotle had said 'there are plants, animals, men, and also God, the most excellent of all'.¹⁸⁹

This series of perfect, discrete empirical analyses does have a unity of conception, but only modern hindsight can detect it—and Hegel several

Reformation return to Aristotle's own texts: hence Hegel probably has in mind Renaissance Aristotelians, discussed in 3.11. Here he sees the general 'revival of the arts and sciences of the ancient world' as a moment of early modern man's rediscovery of himself and even of his *immanent* divinity (3.108–9).

¹⁸⁶ LP 2.129. One quarter remains: 2.127.

¹⁸⁷ LP 2.133.

¹⁸⁸ LP 2.131, cf. 225.

¹⁸⁹ LP 2.136–7; cf. H. Lang's argument that Aristotle develops a series of self-contained *logoi* (1998: 3–33).

times acknowledges the difficulties of the task. The unity he detects is Aristotle's understanding of substance, notably the divine substance or 'divine Thought' in *Metaphysics* 12. Hegel had ended *EPS* with a direct, untranslated quote from *Metaphysics* 11.7, and a similar reverence is evident in *LP* as he quotes from and comments on Aristotle's text extensively. The thrust of his reading sees potentiality and actuality as correlative universals, applicable to all three types of Aristotelian substance: individual things, the soul, and God.¹⁹⁰ The correlatives are inevitably dissociated in physical substances, but in God the Unmoved Mover and Self-Thinking Thought Hegel finds them 'united': God the thinker is and contemplates God the thought and, as both active form and passive matter, God 'produces from itself the determinations of its content'.¹⁹¹ In some such fashion, Aristotle's divine substance shades into Hegel's self-determining universal, the 'circle of reason which returns into itself'.¹⁹² Aristotle's moving, unmoved *Nous* suggests the logical Concept—timelessly foreshadowing the dynamic processes of nature; God (like Plotinus' *nous*) contains as elements of *itself* all the thought-determinations that are the patterns of *things*, and in contemplating itself, it thinks and actualizes its inner contents as the formal, final, and even efficient and material causes of lower phenomena. Perhaps even bolder is Hegel's detection of a hint of 'pure subjectivity' in the divine Thought, as if Aristotle had intuitively grasped the absolute union of substance and subjectivity.¹⁹³ It has been doubted, of course, that the Self-Thinking Thought of *Metaphysics* does or could play the roles of Unmoved Mover (*Physics*) and final object of human desire (*Nicomachean Ethics*). Eager to articulate Aristotle's unity of vision, Hegel may well be overhasty in smoothing over gaps and discontinuities.

As he reconstructs a 'tolerably complete system', Hegel moves from the *Metaphysics*' 'divine' and universal principles to the *Physics*' more particularized metaphysics of nature.¹⁹⁴ Foundational here is the concept of nature itself, which Aristotle grasped 'in the highest and truest manner', a manner

¹⁹⁰ *LP* 2.141–3.

¹⁹¹ *LP* 2.144.

¹⁹² *LP* 2.146.

¹⁹³ 'Pure subjectivity': *LP* 2.140; cf. Joachim's somewhat garbled note construing Aristotle's God in Hegelian terms (1922: xvii n.2: Aristotle 'conceives God as "subject" rather than as "substance", if I may use Hegel's distinction... God is "substance" *qua* self-subsistent and self-determining').

¹⁹⁴ Tolerable system: *LP* 2.153. Recent discussions of Aristotle's 'system' of nature, its unity and moments of discontinuity, include Lang 1998 and Falcon 2005. Joachim's discussion of the relation in Aristotle of metaphysics and physics, divine substance and natural change is extremely Hegelian (esp. 1922: xvii–xviii, comments *ad* 36a14–18 and 38a5–17). Mure praises Joachim as one 'from whom above all men I learned such appreciation of Hegel as I possess' (1940: xx).

'nobler than that of today', such that Kant's important reflections on teleology in the *Critique of Judgment* serve only to revive Aristotle's ancient insights.¹⁹⁵ For, *pace* Newtonian mechanists, nature comprises *both* 'necessity' (by means of external, efficient causes) and conformity to ends (final causes either external or internal). Regarding the latter, Aristotle intelligently focuses not on the external teleology of the *technai*, but the unconscious purposiveness immanent in organic development.¹⁹⁶ Aristotle defines 'nature' as the principle of inward movement—i.e. self-determination¹⁹⁷—and so for Hegel this nature becomes a reflection or embodiment of God's perfect self-fashioning.¹⁹⁸

Fundamental concepts of space, time, movement, and elemental matter follow upon those of Nature and God. With regard to space (*topos*), as 'the first unmoved limit of that which is the comprehending'; to the vacuum, as an impossible notion; to time, as 'the number of motion'; to the fourfold typology of change; to the relation and qualities of the four elements—with regard to all these, Hegel respectfully recaps Aristotle's main arguments, often with lengthy quotes.¹⁹⁹ There is little comparison with Kant's transcendental analysis of space and time, and far more concern with presenting Aristotle's concepts as self-determining unities of opposites. Thus, time for Aristotle is both continuous and discrete in the now-moment—construed rather opaquely by Hegel as 'individuality [that] has universality as its negativity within it', i.e. as Idea.²⁰⁰ Similar analyses of atoms, spatial divisibility, and movement lead to the conclusion that Aristotle advanced so far beyond Kant's confusion about the antinomies of pure reason that he 'solved' Zeno's paradoxes and refuted the hypothesis of atoms.²⁰¹

Visible phenomena offer some easier illustrations of Aristotle's 'deduction' of nature. In Aristotle's vision, the perfect circular motion of the heavens, with its star- and planet-gods, reproduces the divine 'circle of reason which returns into itself', and so the God of invisible thought acquires a visible counterpart: 'the two modes of representing the Absolute are thus thinking reason and the eternal heavens', a statement echoing Kant's 'starry heavens and moral law'—and, even more, Plato's sacred

¹⁹⁵ 'Truest manner': LP 2.156–7. Kant: 2.160.

¹⁹⁶ LP 2.162.

¹⁹⁷ LP 2.156–7.

¹⁹⁸ 'God, as living God, is the universe...[and therein] shows Himself forth' (LP 2.152): reminiscent of LP 2.96 (on Plato's *Timaeus*) and Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* by which Nature is 'visible Spirit' and Spirit 'Invisible Nature' (*Ideas toward a Philosophy of Nature*, 1797).

¹⁹⁹ Space: LP 2.165. Vacuum: 2.166–70. Time: 2.170–2.

²⁰⁰ LP 2.172.

²⁰¹ LP 2.174; cf. SL 164–5.

astronomy.²⁰² Again, Aristotle's deduction of the four elements from each other makes the circle of fire-air-water-earth a single self-determining whole—more insightful for Hegel than the discrete, unchanging simples of contemporary chemists. At the same time, Aristotle's failure to deduce the elements from the prior concepts of matter and nature reflects a broader Greek inability to 'consider the universal as it contains the negative within itself'.²⁰³ For apart from his analyses of time, space, and motion, Aristotle treats natural processes not as uniting opposites but merely as 'the constant rotation of their changes'.²⁰⁴ One thing happens, and another: Hegel surmises that the range of Aristotle's studies, and the hard discreteness of natural phenomena, hindered him from realizing a deeper idealism. Still, Aristotle continues to impress Hegel for his superlative insights. On movement, the elements, the absurdity of the vacuum, and relation of parts and wholes,²⁰⁵ Aristotle can still educate the naïve out of their uncritical empiricism; his orderly procedure from the general to particular is a standing reproach to contemporary physics and the haphazard 'arrangement in our modern text-books'.²⁰⁶

Under Hegel's tutelage, Aristotle's insights are arranged even more explicitly into a progressive manifestation of the Idea, as it evolves from the bare concept of 'nature' through the corollary concepts of space, time, motion, matter, and so forth, down to the nature of the heavens, the elements, the inanimate world, and then up again in ascending circles of life from earthworms to human beings, who can recognize themselves, and all beings, as self-mediating entities to varying degrees. Thus Aristotle's 'tolerably complete system' becomes an evolutionary theory of everything—a non-temporal evolution, for animal species and the cosmos are timeless and have no history. Of particular interest to post-Darwinian readers is Hegel's approval of Aristotle's refutation of Empedoclean evolution. New natural forms may appear to serve some function and then fade away because they were mere 'attempts' and 'not originally constituted so that they should endure'. Aristotle's passage inspires Hegel to add that 'we likewise know of a number of animal tribes which have died out, just because they could not preserve the race', but he quickly dismisses such notions of an 'unthinking evolution' as superficial and 'easily arrived at': Aristotle rightly rejects the

²⁰² LP 2.145; cf. *Timaeus* 34a–b, 62e, 92c (universe a visible god), 48a–e (religiosity of astronomy), *Laws* 893b–899b; cf. Ballew 1979 on the circle as antiquity's pervasive symbol of perfection—in thinking, motion, and being. 'Circle of reason': 2.146.

²⁰³ LP 2.176–7.

²⁰⁴ LP 2.179.

²⁰⁵ Parts and wholes: LP 2.155.

²⁰⁶ LP 2.155.

overemphasis on random change at the expense of endurance and predictable recurrence.²⁰⁷ In so organizing Aristotle's analyses of nature into their inner 'logical' unfolding, Hegel was among many contributing to the emergence of evolution as a central epistemological and ontological principle. Lamarck (1744–1829) fastened on the self-organizing properties of matter as well as the inheritance of acquired characteristics; Goethe's *Urformen* are quasi-Platonic patterns whose variations or deviations (*Abweichungen*) constitute actual species; Schelling's concept of *Potenzen* evolving from simple to complex natural forms would influence Erasmus Darwin and Hegel. But temporal evolution, as proposed by e.g. Lamarck and defended by Saint Hilaire (1772–1844) was not yet accepted by the scientific community, as represented by Cuvier (1769–1832), for example. Thus Hegel's reconstruction of Aristotle's system looks both back to antiquity and forward to Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), while it informs and is informed by his own neo-Aristotelian Nature (or God) as it 'evolves' itself timelessly as a self-similar, ontologically complete whole.

The full story of this 'evolution' might have incorporated *The History of Animals* and other biological works, but Hegel hurries on in his third section to Aristotle's 'philosophy of mind', which spans Hegel's own categories of subjective, objective, and absolute spirit. With regard to the first, Hegel detects in *De Anima* no Wolffian 'metaphysics of the soul', as a 'thing' with qualities.²⁰⁸ Rather, Aristotle is right to define it as the 'energy' or *entelecheia* of the potentially living body: form is the necessary correlative of matter, its senior partner, as it were. Therefore, where Aristotle speaks of the soul as the *logos* of the body, Hegel yet again detects the dynamism of his own Idea:²⁰⁹ the soul-principle extends itself, overreaches environmental materials, builds the body capable of expressing it, and through this body creates other kindred bodies, and social surroundings adequate to them all. Thus the 'idealism of life' lurks behind such Aristotelian statements as 'All the parts of the body are the organs of the soul, and hence exist for its sake'.²¹⁰ Yet if Aristotle's definition of soul is correct, Hegel ignores any proposals of separate star-souls or originary world-soul. For Hegel, there is no 'universal soul' just as there is no 'universal figure', abstractly conceived, for the genera of figure and soul exist only in their species—beginning with

²⁰⁷ LP 2.157–8; cf. 1.187–8 dismissing as unphilosophical Anaximander's suggestion that mankind physically evolved from fish. 'Tolerably complete': 2.153.

²⁰⁸ LP 2.181.

²⁰⁹ LP 2.183–4.

²¹⁰ LP 2.184 (citing Aristotle *De Anima* 2.4, 415b18–20).

triangles and Aristotle's plant-souls, respectively. From plant to animal to human: yet again, Aristotle is right to see each species of soul 'sublimated' as an organ of the higher, so that man 'has three natures united in himself'. With a plant, animal, and rational soul, human beings rise out of nature as its spiritual acme and 'truth': Hegel neglects Aristotle's own further statement that man is not the highest thing in the cosmos, and is less divine than the ensouled planets and stars.²¹¹

Hegel's use of Aristotle's psychological epistemology is less selective and represents an informed and plausible interpretation, even as he incorporates Aristotle's account of sensation, memory, imagination, and thought into his own absolute idealism. First, in Aristotelian sensation, the sense-organ both passively receives the form of the perceived and is potentially capable of receiving *all* appropriate sensibles. Sense-perception itself 'is the receiving of sensible forms without matter';²¹² in receiving forms, the sense-organ takes on the form of the perceived and becomes identical with it. For Aristotle, the eye *is* yellow while it perceives yellow; in Hegel's rendering, the sense-organ 'assimilates' and 'changes the form of the external body into its own'.²¹³ It lodges it within itself alongside its other contents, so that 'the soul becomes the sum of all that is perceived by the senses'.²¹⁴ Thus the seemingly fixed distinction between sensing subject and sensed object dissolves before the perceptive soul's assimilative energy. As 'activity in passivity, the spontaneity which abrogates the receptivity in sense-perception', sense perception works through its seeming passivity to effect 'the identity of itself and its object';²¹⁵ the sensing soul becomes both itself and its other (*sans* matter)—directly analogous to the Absolute 'identity of identity and difference'.²¹⁶

Thinking illustrates even more powerfully the dynamic of activity subsuming passivity as a moment in itself. Sense-organs are limited to their particular sensibles, but the mind is not limited *a priori* to any special thinkables. As 'universal potentiality itself', the mind is initially indeterminate but infinitely receptive. Thinking begins when the mind receives the form of an object (*sans* matter), and thus, as Aristotle states, there 'there is no thinking without an image'. But this process of receiving form is not passive (*pace* naïve empiricists), but rather a spontaneous activity of

²¹¹ Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 1141a20–22. For Hegel's qualification of the notion of an *anima mundi*, cf. *EM* §391. 'Three natures': *LP* 2.184–5.

²¹² *LP* 2.189 (citing *De Anima* 2.12, 424a17–9).

²¹³ *LP* 2.191.

²¹⁴ *LP* 2.190.

²¹⁵ *LP* 2.189.

²¹⁶ *LP* 2.192.

abstracting, appropriating, internalizing, assimilating.²¹⁷ Thinking is *Erinnerung*, literally 'memory', but etymologically and truly, a 'making internal'. Moreover, as it internalizes and assimilates forms to itself the mind becomes them: just as the eye that sees yellow *is* yellow, so the mind *is* what it thinks. Through experience, therefore, the mind fills itself up as the 'place of ideas' in which the forms of everything can subsist.²¹⁸ The mind can ever range freely through its internal space of forms, and so unlike sense-perception (which depends on the presence of particular externals), the mind is not so bound: 'everyone can therefore think when he will',²¹⁹ and in ranging through its *own* content, the mind becomes truly free. Therefore the mind is indeed 'in a sense all things',²²⁰ in two ways: potentially able to think anything, and actually identical with its thoughts when it thinks them. Both senses reveal the mind's infinity, while the second highlights mind's nature as free self-consciousness. In thinking its thoughts, past acts of thought, capacities for thought, and so forth, the self-reflexive mind becomes one with itself through the mediation of its internalized forms. In other words, the active intellect actualizes itself by the mediation of the passive, and in the limit, as it were, the mediation vanishes: in the divine Mind, thinker and thought, form and matter are exactly one, and it is as abstractions from or special cases of *this* prime reality that there arise the ratiocination and sense-perception of finite minds. For Hegel, this alleged identity of 'the energy of thinking and the object of thought' is the 'chief moment in Aristotle's philosophy', so that ancient and modern philosophy lead to the 'same fundamental theory': the union of subject and object in Absolute Spirit. Neither Locke, Hume, Rousseau, nor Kant knew the mind so well: *de Anima* remains 'by far the most admirable' study of the mind, and the 'main aim' of the philosophy of mind can only be to 'reintroduce' and 'reinterpret' the lessons of the Master.²²¹

²¹⁷ 'Universal potentiality': LP 2.194. No thinking without an image: *De Anima* 3.7, 431a16-17 and 3.8, 432a8-9. While Hegel's Aristotle partially accepts the motto *nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu* (LP 1.195), his famous metaphor of the perceiving soul as stamped wax (2.189-90)—or its modern equivalent, the thinking soul as a printed book—have been ever misunderstood by superficially empiricist readers like Tennemann (2.195-6).

²¹⁸ 'Place of ideas': LP 2.198 (citing *De Anima* 3.4, 429a27); cf. 1.190 (soul as 'the universal medium' for representations).

²¹⁹ LP 2.187 (citing *De Anima* 2.5, 417b23-4).

²²⁰ Is all: LP 2.198 (citing *De Anima* 3.8, 431b21). Thinks all: 2.194 (citing *De Anima* 3.4, 428a18-20).

²²¹ 'Chief moment', 'same fundamental theory': LP 2.148-9. 'Most admirable': EM §378; Kantian psychology 'lame' in comparison with Aristotle's: SL 692. My attempted summary streamlines many issues in both Aristotle and Hegel: in more detailed readings, Weiss (1969:

The claim that Aristotle is more advanced than many moderns extends also to practical ethics. The prime point here for Hegel is not his doctrine of virtue as a mean; nor the subjection of particular passions and actions to a rational universal; nor his discussion of happiness as the ethical end.²²² It is contemplative happiness—which Aristotle himself limns in scattered remarks, and with hesitations about its human practicality—that becomes for Hegel ‘the absolute end existing in and for itself’, as the human mind blends with God’s in a ‘divine happiness’ that is the final goal.²²³ And yet, Aristotle’s categorical imperative to ‘immortalize oneself’ does not suggest to Hegel possibilities of mystical communion, or communities of mutually supportive contemplatives, and in turning to Aristotle’s politics, Hegel praises him rather for assimilating the individual to the ‘divinity’ of the articulated state. Here Aristotle is ‘even now full of instruction for us’ with regard to the elements of the state, and constitutional arrangements. In *Politics* I, for example, the social whole is logically prior to its parts yet temporally posterior, at once defining them abstractly and being constituted by them in fact: the family relation precedes and defines gender distinctions; the state is prior to both family and individual, and is ‘the *prius*, the substantial, the chief’ that ‘constitutes their substantiality’.²²⁴ Much of this *does* permit Hegelian readings: for Aristotle too, the city is not an external instrument, but the necessary (i.e. ‘natural’) objectification of the individual will, just as it is ‘actualized through subjective activity’, i.e. citizens’ virtuous actions.²²⁵ Hegel also directs some praise to the profusion of constitutional detail in the *Politics*: ‘no land was so rich as Greece, alike in the number of its constitutions, and in the frequent changes from one to another of these in a single state’.²²⁶ Yet empirical knowledge alone did not allow Aristotle, or any ancient, to grasp the ‘abstract right of our modern states’, which combine extreme personal liberty with social coordination.

Surprisingly, Hegel neglects the ‘system’ of art implicit in Aristotle’s *Poetics*: its historical survey of genres, its definition of tragedy and comedy with their characteristic matter, formal structures, efficient means, and ends.

37–54), and de Laurentiis (2006) stress Hegel’s essential insight, Ferrarin his ultimate distortion of Aristotle (2004), Drüe the Wolffian context (2000); R. Williams seeks to reconcile Ferrarin and Drüe in his ‘Hegel between the ancients and the moderns’ (2007: 7–12).

²²² Doctrine of the mean contains ‘no profound insight’: LP 2.204.

²²³ ‘Absolute end’: LP 2.202. ‘Happiness’: 2.204.

²²⁴ ‘Full of instruction’: LP 2.209. ‘Substantiality’: 2.208. ²²⁵ LP 1.207.

²²⁶ LP 2.209. The Aristotelian *Athenian Constitution* was not discovered until 1879: Hegel bases his remarks on the *Politics* primarily.

But if Aristotle's thinking about aesthetic thought is passed over, his logic could not be ignored, and is honoured by being treated last—perhaps because it is no mere 'tool' of knowledge, but Aristotle's supreme achievement? Whatever Hegel's precise motivation for discussing it last, he takes issue with the Kantian and traditional estimate of Aristotelian logic as 'a complete and perfect science'.²²⁷ It is indeed a 'marvellous' work of abstraction that 'rendered a never-ending service'; containing the core 'truth', it still provides the 'basis of what in modern times is known as logic'.²²⁸ Moreover, it is an ontological logic, whose categories 'constitute the essential realities of Being' and whose forms 'constitute a net of eternal activity sunk within' concrete experience. Aristotle's achievement in wresting the timeless forms of terms, judgments, and syllogisms from the entangled complexities of natural language and thought is a 'masterpiece of empiricism'.²²⁹ Yet like his other empirical masterpieces, Aristotle's categories, judgments, and syllogisms remain fairly discrete, underived from a single principle. Thus, the common criticism that Aristotle merely lists his categories returns in Hegel's broader critique that he provides only a 'natural history of finite thought', a 'logic of the understanding', whose constituents 'imitate the categories of the Absolute', but do not coalesce into a systematic totality.²³⁰ Relating the finite to the finite, this logic is not even adequate to Aristotle's best work, and if he had thought merely in terms of his own syllogistic, he would never have understood the state, nature, and being in the organic terms that he did. Uninformed therefore by his own deeper intuitions about the divine Thought, Aristotle's logic remains ungrounded, and hardly exhausts the nature of thinking. Yet its constituent material remains valid and needs only to be given more coherent form; as with his philosophy of nature and mind, Aristotle's 'logic really requires recasting'²³¹ into the kind of self-supporting whole, the modern organon that *SL* purports to be—in Hegel's view, the first real logical advance since Aristotle.

To sum up, Aristotle is in many ways *the* determinative thinker for Hegel—for his own thought, as well as for the subsequent tradition. The vocabulary he developed—potentiality and actuality, matter and form,

²²⁷ *LP* 2.211. ²²⁸ *LP* 2.219–20.

²²⁹ *LP* 2.219 (cf. *EN* §246A where the system of thought-determinations is imaged as 'the diamond-net' by which all existence is caught and known). 'Essential realities': 2.222; Jaeger explicitly disagrees (1968 [1934]: 370).

²³⁰ 'Natural history': *LP* 211. Finite logic: 2.213, 2.223. 'Categories of the Absolute': 2.213. Underived: 2.220–1 (a criticism made in Kant 1991b: A81/B107).

²³¹ *LP* 2.223.

substance and accident, and so forth—would remain dominant, but where others simply use or translate Aristotle's words, Hegel develops parallels of his own. Aristotle's potency and actuality become for Hegel the implicit and explicit, or alternatively, the in-itself (potency), for-itself (first actuality), in-and-for-itself (second actuality). The parallels are also more broadly conceptual: to Aristotle's layered hylomorphism, extending from God's pure activity down to the passivity of matter, Hegel offers an evolutionary monism where the Concept unfurls into individual forms of logic, nature, and consciousness. But where Aristotle often wavers between monism and a more 'Platonic' dualism, Hegel more firmly dismisses anything outside the purview of the Concept: where Aristotle possibly suggests indeterminate 'prime matter' as an abstract postulate, Hegel dismisses the thing-in-itself as a logical absurdity; where Aristotle lists eight or ten separate categories, Hegel joins them to others in a single chain of deduction; where for Aristotle substances subsist independent of their predicates, for Hegel they are bound together reciprocally; where for Aristotle divine, heavenly, and natural substances are not wholly continuous, for Hegel all things develop and remain in God; where Aristotle posits four causes and does not always unite the three non-material ones, Hegel makes his unified Concept at once its own matter, form, end, and moving cause; where for Aristotle, God, the happy life, ideal city, and well-made poem are self-sufficient, for Hegel they are so only to the extent that they individualize the absolute, self-similar Whole. One may indeed argue that Hegel reworks Aristotle's most important ideas in a direction natural to them, shaping them into his own fully organic monism. Here Hegel goes much further than Aristotle: if Aristotle applies his organic vision to the study of dramatic poetry, rhetoric, and the *polis*, as well as organisms and stars, Hegel applies it to all of nature and history, where each civilization grows, blossoms, and declines, like a plant or animal. Hegel's is indeed a powerful synthesis and extension of many aspects of Aristotle's work, not to be caricatured. At the same time, one can remain somewhat sceptical of Hegel's appropriation: Aristotle links but does not obviously identify metaphysics, physics, and ethics, as Hegel seeks to unify logic, nature, and mind; Aristotle hesitates to identify conventional and contemplative happiness, or to fully assimilate practical *phronēsis* to *epistēmē*, *sophia*, and other intellectual virtues, as Hegel does not hesitate to incorporate the objective spirit of political life into the absolute spirit of philosophical science. Perhaps most un-Hegelian of all are Aristotle's doubts regarding the *actually* infinite: it does not exist, and even if it did, would it not remain beyond the human mind, which for all its

noetic intuition of essences can only know the potentially infinite, and so enters into the Divine Thought only fitfully?

5.3. Three Hellenistic Systems

Aristotle's God is for Hegel the culminating truth of Greek thought hitherto: Presocratic nature and Sophistic-Stoic subjectivity are united here even more profoundly than in Plato's Ideas. This culmination is also a beginning, and his work is a veritable 'treasure-house of philosophic conceptions'²³² to be developed further—self-consciously by Hegel, implicitly by his Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics. Hegel's second stage for Greek philosophy is therefore a systematizing phase, as it consolidates the main insights of the previous period into well-organized wholes.²³³ It was certainly clear from antiquity that Heraclitean physics and Cynic self-insistence, or Democritean atomism and Cyrenaic hedonism, were combined by the Stoics and Epicureans, respectively, while Academics and Sceptics revived the critical attitude of the Sophists and Socrates. But Hegel's bolder argument is that Aristotle's God served as the *universal* informing the essential *particulars* of the Hellenistic philosophies; it becomes *the* guiding principle for these *systems*, as it had not been for Aristotle himself. That is, Aristotle's Divine Thought—'the imperturbability and uniformity of mind in itself, which suffers through nothing, and which is affected neither by enjoyment, pain, nor any other bond'—becomes subjectivized and incarnated, as it were, in the Stoic, Epicurean, and Sceptic sage.²³⁴ The Hellenistic sage is also self-sufficient, self-legislating, self-actualizing—and like Aristotle's God, remains abstractly so, for he defines himself in isolation from nature, society, and even his empirical self.

This alienation of thinker from externality, by which subject confronts object as a foreign *other*, is not a given or final one. Hegel does not associate it primarily with Descartes's modernity, or with the philosophical attitude *per se*. Rather it is the relation most characteristic of post-Classical and Roman cultures, when the naïve experiential unity of the 'bright Grecian

²³² LP 2.224. ²³³ See especially LP 2.228–31.

²³⁴ Imperturbable mind: LP 2.236. Sages' and Schools' common principle ('pure relation of self-consciousness to itself'): 2.232–3. Aristotelian 'thought of thought' (*Denken des Denkens*) is refashioned by Stoics (2.254, 2.270) and Sceptics (2.369), as by Plotinus (2.419, 2.429) and Neoplatonists (2.452). Zeller echoes Hegel's reading here (1892: 18–19; cf. 396–8, 511–13); cf. Reale on Hellenistic *systems*, individualistic sages and their 'deification' (1985: 7–15).

world' withered before external force and inner disillusion. Subjected to distant powers, unenthused by old gods, the wisest articulated what was dawning on all. Worth, happiness, and salvation can be found only within and so one should 'care for the soul' and cultivate one's 'inner god' above all else. Subjectivity pervades Hegel's Rome, and thinking subjectivity defines the post-Classical Schools, as they suspend the authority of custom and immediate experience, articulate criteria for knowledge and action, and try to recover in the sovereign thinker what has been lost from the world without. With seductive plausibility, Hegel discerns his own UPI dialectic at work in and between the three main Schools: the abstract universals of the Stoics engender a mirroring opposite in the Epicurean focus on sensual particulars, and both dogmatic systems find their *Aufhebung* in the infinite negativity of the Sceptics.²³⁵

5.3.1. Stoicism

The first system that would be critiqued by Sceptics is the Stoics' rational pantheism.²³⁶ Systematizing Heraclitus, the Stoics spoke of the *logos* as the one dynamic substance that underlies, becomes, and transcends all particular beings. To its many names—God, Zeus, Reason (*nous*), Foresight (*pro-noia*), Fate, Nature, Fire—Hegel adds his own, when he translates Cleanthes' *logos* as the Concept. The Concept embraces both form and matter of phenomena, and so too the Stoics' God fuses active and passive aspects, like Aristotle's Self-Thinking Thought or Spinoza's substance with its *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*. As active, the Stoics' God is the 'totality of forms'; it embraces all *spermatikoi logoi*, those seedling-universals (as it were) that expand in passive matter to become determinate beings. The details of this Stoic physics have 'no longer any philosophic interest', but the broader framework provides Hegel with a tolerable adumbration of his idealism, and he quotes Sextus Empiricus to show that, for the Stoics also, the whole issues forth via its 'rational seeds' into phenomena which, in turn,

²³⁵ 'Bright Grecian world': LP 2.234. UPI dialectic: e.g. 2.232.

²³⁶ In the absence of many 'original works by the older Stoics', Hegel falls back on later representatives: Cicero, identified (wrongly) as a Stoic (LP 2.243); Seneca, brilliant but tiresome, whose sophistic dialectic has hints of Romantic irony and the Fichtean egoist (2.272–3); Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, morally admirable, yet primarily preachers of virtue, in whom the speculative genius of Plato and Aristotle has all but been submerged (2.238–42).

bear the impress of the totality.²³⁷ This physics is a kind of pantheism, but this is no reproach, for 'all Philosophy is pantheistic, for it goes to prove that the rational Notion is in the world'. Stoic pantheism does err, however, in *directly* equating the divine with specific phenomena, and so making the infinite simplistically finite.²³⁸ Every oracle, prophet, and liver-reader is thereby sanctified, and the deeper workings of providence are twisted into an 'external, teleological superstition'.²³⁹ Stoic physics is too abstract: its principles (monism, pantheism) are true, but it fails to relate them properly to actual specifics.

Abstract also is the Stoic *kritērion* or standard of truth, the so-called *phantasia kataleptikē* or 'conception that is laid hold of'.²⁴⁰ To illustrate what knowledge is, Zeno is said to have slowly closed his palm into a fist and then placed his other hand over it: so the mind proceeds from perception through mental assent and conceptual comprehension to knowledge. Hegel quotes Cicero's anecdote and approves the image in his own terms: the hand that clasps the fist, that in turn clasps itself, illustrates the self-conscious certainty of science itself, for if I truly know X, then I know that I know X, or, in other terms, knowledge is the 'unity of apprehending thought and Being... in which neither can exist without the other'. Furthermore, the image expresses how knowledge comes not as sudden insight or revelation from without: it is the result of a process that moves predictably through sensation, perception, conceptualization, and the self-conscious appropriation of the concept as mine.²⁴¹ Again, the image illustrates the active grasping essential to knowledge, and so Stoic epistemology revisits a main theme of Hegel's Aristotle, but with a more idealistic flavour. Specifically, Hegel alludes to Kant when he writes that, for the Stoics, truth is not the correspondence or adequation of subjective ideas to an external situation. Rather, as in the 'celebrated definition' (i.e. of Kant), 'the harmony of object and consciousness' occurs only if objects meet the spontaneous demands of the mind. For the object, being often 'changeable, false, and contingent', often fails to satisfy the mind's demand for universality and necessity, and so proves 'untrue for mind'. In its relation to objects, then, it is the mind that is determinative, for it must give *its* assent to the object. Hence, 'the principal point of the Stoics' is the proto-Kantian one 'that the objective corresponds

²³⁷ *Logos'* names, Sextus: LP 2.247. Details not important: 2.244–5.

²³⁸ Philosophy is pantheistic: LP 2.243; cf. 2.381–2 for pantheism's truth ('beginning of the elevation of spirit') and falsity (God finitized).

²³⁹ LP 2.247–8.

²⁴⁰ LP 2.250.

²⁴¹ LP 2.249–51.

to thought'.²⁴² To explore this reading further, Hegel draws on Sextus Empiricus' criticism of the Stoics (*Adversus Mathematicos* 10.183). Thinking subject and thought object are correlative, Sextus acknowledges, but the Stoics failed in stressing the former only. Taking this as his clue, Hegel concludes that the Stoic criterion is generally true, but vacuous: in Zeno's image, the hands do not grasp anything particular other than themselves. More broadly, in being *a-pathetic* and therefore unaffected by the known object, the Stoic stage must remain internally undifferentiated and without content. Hence Hegel concludes: 'Stoicism is only this return of mind into itself, positing the unity of itself and the object, and recognizing the harmony; but not the going forth again to the extension of the real knowledge of a content from itself'.²⁴³ The imputation of vacuousness extends also to their logic, which is purely formal, with none of the ontological purchase of Aristotle's categories. The Stoics would make the sage primarily a logician (like Chrysippus), but their logic only places him in a prison of abstract and wholly immanent thought-patterns.²⁴⁴

The formalism of Stoic logic has its counterpart in their moral thought. Hegel anchors his interpretation in Chrysippus' analysis of nature, virtue, and *oikeiōsis*, as reported by Diogenes Laertius. Here the organism's primary desire is not for pleasure or any external *per se*, but for self-preservation. Stoic *oikeiōsis*, therefore, is construed by Hegel as a 'harmony with self', which includes the desired object as a mere means thereto. Equivalently, what Hegel's Chrysippus detects in the heart of natural desire is a dialectical evolution of the will, as well as a revision of Aristotle's biology: natural instinct, inclination (*hormē*), and reason (*logos*) determine plants, animals, and humans, respectively, to seek self-satisfaction above all, and to this one end, the particularity of the objects appropriated is of relative indifference. This is the ethical counterpart of knowing that one knows X: in willing and knowing, the object gains value only as a moment of the subject's self-mediation and self-consciousness.²⁴⁵ Hegel can therefore plausibly characterize the self-sufficient Stoic sage in his own terms: the Stoic ideal is 'the will

²⁴² 'Celebrated definition', contingent object 'untrue for mind': LP 251–2. 'Principal point': 2.257; cf. Berthold-Bond 1989: 32–3.

²⁴³ LP 2.254.

²⁴⁴ Formal logic: LP 2.256–7 (Stoic *modus tollens* also mentioned as formally empty). Zeller expands this critique, citing the Stoics' neglect of induction, appeal 'to what is directly certain' only, and injudicious recasting of Peripatetic logic (1892: 123–4).

²⁴⁵ Running commentary on Diogenes Laertius 7.85–8, with reference to Aristotle's teleology: LP 2.258–60.

of the subject which in itself only wills itself'.²⁴⁶ More broadly, Stoic virtue involves turning away from mere custom to live in accordance with the universal *logos*. To live in harmony with the *logos* of one's true rational nature, to be innerly harmonious and consistent, and to honour practical reason above external circumstances and personal inclinations are all reminiscent of Kant, and so Hegel will speak advisedly of Stoic *Moralität* rather than 'virtue', given the latter's heteronomous connotations.²⁴⁷

Of course, the Stoics go further than Kant to identify the inner man with the divine *logos*, and, in Hegel's rendering, the 'Stoic force of character which says that man has only to seek to remain like himself'²⁴⁸ reflects the perfect self-mediation of Aristotle's divine Thinker. Yet while Hegel generally accepts the Stoics' understanding of happiness as perfect *oikeiōsis* and self-harmony—it being the 'greatness of the Stoic philosophy' to identify the self with the universal mind rather than with the wavering stream of consciousness or the unessential appendage of the body²⁴⁹—he will also accept Kant's contention that the concept of virtue does not include that of happiness *a priori*.²⁵⁰ Happiness must also accommodate one's contingent, natural needs, and a merely 'universal' or 'spiritual enjoyment' is 'dull and insipid'.²⁵¹ Dull and tedious therefore are the truths that Stoics endlessly repeat about Nature, Virtue, and Reason: one should live in accordance with nature; what is natural to human beings is virtue; to act virtuously is to act in accordance with the rational *logos*; in according with the *logos*, the sage lives in accordance with nature—and so the Stoics come full circle with arguments and clichés that convince only the converted.²⁵² This circular reasoning is not wrong, as it asserts the key truth 'of holding oneself in a pure harmony with oneself as a merely thinking nature'.²⁵³ But what exactly are the virtues and the rational laws of nature that the sage cultivates? The Stoics can scarcely say, and just as they can hardly name one particular duty, so they can hardly name one sage. The sage remains an abstract ideal, and even if Socrates and Zeno are hopefully adduced, they are quickly hedged around with doubts, and Stoic self-certainties veer into a relativity of argument and inner scepticism.²⁵⁴

The inadequacy of Stoicism comes to the fore in its last great representatives. No writer is more eloquent about the 'power of willing the good'

²⁴⁶ LP 2.267.

²⁴⁷ LP 2.265 (*Wir sagen statt Tugend Moralität*), 2.273.

²⁴⁸ LP 2.264.

²⁴⁹ LP 2.265–6.

²⁵⁰ LP 2.261–2.

²⁵¹ LP 2.269.

²⁵² See LP 2.258–9 on the 'formal' circularity of Stoic reasoning about the *summum bonum*.

²⁵³ LP 2.263.

²⁵⁴ See LP 2.268–73. Stoic formulae true, but abstract: 2.260.

than Marcus Aurelius, yet all the noble intentions of his private *Meditations* were powerless to change the empire he ruled, for legal system and precedent rather than Stoic principles defined his actions as emperor.²⁵⁵ Stoicism helped Marcus as emperor no more than it did Epictetus as slave. Both could identify themselves systematically with the 'inner god', and be 'kings' of their inner realm. Yet their consciousness of rational duty did not issue forth in specific actual duties. Their pantheistic physics of an all-creative, fiery Breath could not explain particular phenomena, which become valueless—or dubious material for a superstitious teleology. Their formal logic, and criterion of the *phantasia katalēptikē*, can only affirm the generalities that God and the *logos*, virtue and the sage's self-certainty, are alone real and valuable. The Stoic claims union with God, but it is a merely inner god, limited by the external world which it cannot understand or transform. Stoic self-mediation thus proves to be a hollow instantiation of Aristotle's Divine Mind: abstractly true, but without concrete resonance. Unable to burst beyond the gyre of his own edifying formulas, a Stoic like Marcus cannot be fully moral, happy, or free. The despair that sounds through his *Meditations* belongs not to Marcus alone, but to Stoicism as a whole, and indeed the Roman world, with its alienated masses and seething satirists. The 'unhappy consciousness' implicit in Stoicism laments the infinite gap between its ideal duty and sordid surroundings; rational duty and real happiness are split asunder in the wars, civil wars, and Tacitean terror that Rome is chief heir to. Nature and history are devalued as realms of mere happening, and the Stoics are free only in their 'virtuous' response to them, the virtue of inner freedom becoming the only good, its absence the only evil. Hegel thus sees the self-sufficient Stoic self under two lenses: a particularization of Aristotle's Self-Thinking Thought, and a generalization of Roman legal personality.²⁵⁶ Inadequate in both regards, Stoicism's one-sided abstractions invite their opposite in hedonism—which has its most intelligent advocates in the Epicureans.

²⁵⁵ LP 2.273–4.

²⁵⁶ Tacitean terror: 'As a universal form of the World-Spirit, Stoicism could only appear on the scene in a time of universal fear and bondage, but also a time of universal culture which had raised itself to the level of thought' (PS §199). Nature devalued: PR §138. Only one good, virtue: PR §98R. Stoicism as philosophical expression of Roman self: 'Stoicism is nothing else but the consciousness which reduces to its abstract form the principle of legal status. By its flight from the actual world it attained only to the *thought* of independence; it is absolutely for *itself*, in that it does not attach its being to anything that exists... In the same way, the right of a person is not tied to a richer or more powerful existence of the individual as such, nor again to a universal living Spirit, but rather to the pure One of its abstract actuality' (PS §479). On Stoicism's affinity to the Roman world, see LP 1.53–4, 2.234, 2.273–6, LH 318, 329.

5.3.2. Epicureanism

Hegel's Stoics focused on consciousness as abstract universality, but were unable to deduce particular laws and duties from it.²⁵⁷ His Epicureans, oppositely, take as their leading principle 'consciousness in the form of immediate particularity',²⁵⁸ but will therefore struggle to justify their universal generalizations. Sensualism underlies all aspects of Epicureanism—empirical epistemology, materialistic physics, hedonistic ethics. In this, its ideas are little different from those of the sense-loving masses, and its 'very lack of [speculative] thought' gave it a broad, enduring appeal and stifled further development.²⁵⁹ Still, Epicureanism rose above a stupid hedonism by the fact that it gave universal form to its plebeian content, fashioning a 'system of ordinary conceptions'²⁶⁰ that allowed it to become a rival and parallel to Stoicism.

The Epicurean *kanōn* responds to the Stoic *kritērion* but unlike its formalistic rival includes an implicit ontology and is hence 'really a system of logic'.²⁶¹ Here the Epicureans assert that the mind progresses through three stages: in sensation, singular phenomena are grasped discretely, without mental combination; in conception, many repeated sensations are 'recollected' in summary form; and in opinion (*doxa*), a conception is compared with a sensation to produce a determinative judgment (e.g. 'This is a tree'). This final stage of judgment is for Hegel 'the union of the [first] two',²⁶² but Epicureans remain unaware of such logical subtleties—as well as of problems in their naïve empiricism. For instance, they do not reflect how the comparisons and analogies that transform the material of sensation into conceptions involve a formal contribution from the mind not reducible to sense itself: in themselves, repeated sensations and memory cannot impart the universality requisite in concepts. Hence the Epicurean *kanōn* cannot account for essential Epicurean ideas—such imperceptibles as the atom, void, cosmos, or the happiness of a *whole* life. In deriving *doxai* wholly from sensual materials, the Epicurean mind blinkers itself to look 'down' to

²⁵⁷ Stoicism's 'main difficulty': LP 2.257.

²⁵⁸ LP 2.276.

²⁵⁹ 'Lack': LP 2.279. Epicurus' formulations were repeated dogmatically for centuries, with few creative elaborations. The exception, Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, passed over in LP, is mentioned in LA (1.423) as a merely didactic transcription of Epicurus' ideas into prosaic verse.

²⁶⁰ LP 2.281 (italics added); cf. 2.288–9 (atomic doctrine is only sensationalism systematized). The Cyrenaic adherence to pleasure is equally unphilosophical, and redeemed solely by the 'philosophic culture' of individual Cyrenaics and their tenet that only 'cultivation of thought' effects true pleasure (1.471).

²⁶¹ LP 2.281.

²⁶² LP 2.281.

particulars as the sole reality, even though these are wholly inadequate grounds for its envisioned cosmos, gods, and sage. In all, the Epicurean canonic of sensation–conception–opinion represents a ‘very trivial process’ that is ‘correct on the whole, but quite superficial’.²⁶³ the mirror image of Stoic superficiality.

Similarly one-sided is Epicurean physics. It claims that in sensation, objects’ surfaces emit streams of atoms, which are invisible yet preserve the surfaces’ atomic patterns, so that a ‘picture’ of the original is projected onto the sense organs. This is not only ‘a very trivial’ analysis but a self-refuting one. The assertion of *invisible* emanations contradicts the criterion of sensation, and ignores the role of mind underlying the whole process of perception: the mind is treated tacitly as an ‘interruption’ of or ‘resistance’ to the constantly streaming atoms, and thus as simply a ‘negativity’ vis-à-vis the ‘real’ material emissions.²⁶⁴ Following Democritus, Epicurus thinks that what truly exists is not thought—but unthinking atoms and the void. In this void atoms collide and conjoin randomly, and yet if atomic *chance* constitutes the essence of things, there is no convincing explanation of how this essence can become manifest in its seeming opposite—in sensation, thought, and other forms of *purposive* activity. And in fact Epicureanism is marked by a strong wilfulness, in its insistence that reality reduces to haphazard atomic motion, that organisms exhibit merely apparent purposiveness, that thoughts too are moving particles, and that the gods are some really exquisite atoms. All of this is to systematize a fundamental oversight, and in reducing their own whole thought-system to emanations of discrete, random, unthinking atoms, the Epicureans only betray the meagreness of their self-consciousness. The contradiction pervading their naïve materialism is compounded by many minor ones: the claim, for instance, that atomic ‘indivisibles’ have magnitude, shape, and weight.²⁶⁵

The chasm that Epicurus’ physics posits between atomic reality and phenomenal appearances is bridged in practice by the analogies Epicurus draws between perceptible appearances and imperceptible essence (i.e. the atom). Analogical thinking, Hegel remarks, links some finite phenomena with others, and so leads on to ‘general concepts, laws, forces, and so on, electricity and magnetism, for instance, and these are then applied by us to such objects and activities as we cannot ourselves directly perceive’.²⁶⁶ In

²⁶³ LP 2.285–6.²⁶⁴ LP 2.287–8.²⁶⁵ SL 134–5.²⁶⁶ LP 2.293.

this, we may hear foreshadowings of the hypothetico-deductive model, but Hegel simply links analogy with modern scientific method. It was Epicurus' very method, making him the 'inventor' of empirical science (including empirical psychology)—extending Aristotle's more *a priori* approach.²⁶⁷ Moreover, it reveals Epicurus as a champion of 'enlightenment' and scourge of ancient superstition: natural events are *not* the immediate effects of 'God, angels, demons'. On the other hand, if 'the so-called enlightenment is the fact of remaining in the finite', the compliment is double-edged: these blinkered Epicureans have little sense of the infinite constituting the finite, and perhaps for this reason Epicurus' actual analogies are 'feeble and of little weight... an ill-considered medley of all manner of loose conceptions'. Indeed, the sheer plurality of his analogical explanations, which may reflect his penchant for sheer particularity, amounts to a non-explanation.²⁶⁸

Epicurus' mechanical analogies for the soul-thing form the transition from physics to ethics, and Hegel hurries impatiently past the 'empty words and meaningless conceptions' which Epicurus juggles to explain mental life.²⁶⁹ By contrast, Epicurean ethics is 'the most interesting... the best part of that philosophy',²⁷⁰ and some of Hegel's praise for Epicurean 'enlightenment' is revealing of his own preferences. Quoting at length from Epicurus' *Letter to Menoeceus*, to the effect that 'death is nothing to us', Hegel agrees unreservedly that a confident unconcern about death is indeed 'the right way in which to regard the future', for in the natural events of the body's dissolution, the spirit is not involved and hence cannot be concerned. There is a curiously undialectical ring to such crisp contentions as 'when we are in life, death is not there, and when death is there, we are not'²⁷¹—so different from the arguments of Plato's *Phaedo*, the words of the Mass of the Dead ('In the midst of life we are in death'), or Hegelian *Erinnerung*, by which the dead past is sublimated in the living present. In any case, unconcern for his particular death or future gives Hegel's Epicurus a true piety. He turns to his blessed atomic gods with pure reverence, not fearing punishment or hoping for any special providence. Like the Stoics, the

²⁶⁷ Modern method: 2.293, 2.296. 'Inventor' (*Erfinder*): LP 2.297. Aristotle: 2.295–6.

²⁶⁸ 'Demons', 'so-called enlightenment' (*sogenannte Erklären*): LP 2.298. 'Medley': 2.293.

²⁶⁹ LP 2.300. Epicurus' analogies, it seems, are so tedious that Hegel prefers to mention modern ones (nerves ~ strings, billiard-balls), which nevertheless remain illustrative of 'the manner of Epicurus' (2.294).

²⁷⁰ LP 2.300.

²⁷¹ LP 2.306–7. Pinkard 2000: 577, W.J. Desmond 2003: 16 recount an anecdote possibly revealing Hegel's own sceptical views about personal immortality.

Epicureans find tranquillity in contemplating the cosmic whole—but without the superstition that embarrasses Stoic teleology.

To come then to the inner contradiction of the whole Epicurean system. Its slavery to particular pleasures might lead to a crass and arbitrary hedonism, and, on the surface of it, the Epicurean 'moral principle [of optimizing pleasure] is in fact not moral'.²⁷² Nevertheless, in practice Epicurus exhorted his followers to *reflect* upon their pleasures and pains, to recognize that momentary pleasures are often less desirable than the pleasurable absence of pain, and so by meditating day and night on the options most desirable over a *whole* life, to learn *phronēsis* and 'live as a god amongst men'.²⁷³ By thinking on such abstractions as the atom, enduring self, maximum of pleasure, and lifelong happiness, 'the particular is . . . raised into the form of universality':²⁷⁴ the Epicureans end up hedonizing in a philosophical key. Indeed, by thinking on the enduring pleasures of thinking, the Epicurean absolutizes the contemplative life. The pleasures of the sage meditating in his garden, the bliss of the gods in the void between worlds (*intermundia*) echo (in Hegel's view) the life of the Aristotelian Divine Mind: the atomic gods that are the Epicureans' ideal selves are 'nothing else than the Holy, the Universal in concrete form'.²⁷⁵

As they find virtue and tranquillity in universalizing thought, Epicurean sages and gods become brethren to their Stoic rivals, and even such a 'thoroughgoing and uncompromising Stoic' as Seneca has to admit the deeper affinity of the two Schools.²⁷⁶ Hegel would characterize the mirroring opposition more thoroughly and it is worth drawing this out to illustrate his conception of how philosophy remains 'identical' through difference and variation. Ostensibly, Stoicism and Epicureanism were bitter rivals. On most questions, they differed sharply: against the Stoics' *phantasia katalēptikē* was opposed the Epicureans' canon of sensation; against the Stoics' monistic continuum, the Epicureans' void and atoms; against Stoic virtue, Epicurean pleasure; against a pantheistic *Logos*, aloof atomic gods; against superstition of providential oracles and prophecy, a more sceptical 'enlightenment'. Hegel does not so succinctly detail how Epicureanism is the 'exact parallel' of Stoicism and how they are 'directly opposed to one another'.²⁷⁷ But these

²⁷² LP 2.300. ²⁷³ LP 2.308 (quoting from Diogenes Laertius 10.135 and preceding).

²⁷⁴ LP 2.302.

²⁷⁵ LP 2.304. For Zeller too, 'the same [i.e. sagely] ideal is reproduced in the Epicurean Gods. In their isolated contemplation of themselves, what else do they resemble but the God of Aristotle?' (1892: 513).

²⁷⁶ LP 2.302; cf. 2.309.

²⁷⁷ LP 2.310.

details *are* suggested by his thesis that they mirror each other as systematic variations of Aristotelianism. Aristotle's self-determining Mind underlies concepts of the cosmos, divine, and sage for both rationalistic Stoics and empiricist Epicureans. Both articulate the truth—one-sidedly, and too subjectively. The Stoics cannot evolve particular objects and duties out of their universals; the Epicureans cannot evolve universal concepts out of sense-particulars. Here the Epicureans err more gravely than the Stoics,²⁷⁸ yet both are caught in the dogmatism of the understanding as they juggle fixed principles without deeper mediation. As in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, the dogmatism of Epicurean and Stoicism could only issue in antinomies—atom or plenum, chance or providence, happiness or virtue—that remain unresolvable unless some higher perspective is attained. This higher perspective is Scepticism.

5.3.3. Scepticism

The stereotype of Hegel as a dogmatic 'metaphysician' is completely belied by his lifelong engagement with scepticism.²⁷⁹ It ignores his Jena essay (1802), which praises Plato's *Parmenides* and the Pyrrhonists.²⁸⁰ It ignores *PS* §§202–6 and its own self-description as a work of 'self-consummating scepticism' (§78), a 'way of despair' and progressive disillusionment with anything less than the Absolute. It ignores the 'destructive' dimension of dialectic in *SL*.²⁸¹ It ignores how in its levelling effects 'Roman power is the real Scepticism'.²⁸² It thus ignores the sense how for Hegel the battle between dogmatism and scepticism (so central to Hume and Kant) was really fought out in antiquity: *LP* devotes almost as much attention to the Sceptics as to Stoics and Epicureans combined.²⁸³ It is true that Hegel comes to express himself with magisterial confidence, and for stubborn naysaying has nothing

²⁷⁸ Epicurus 'banishes' thought, not realizing that his atoms are conceptions (*LP* 2.292); he 'abrogates unity' (2.292) by making things, concepts, souls, worlds, and 'all originations...chance combinations' of atoms (2.291)—the same mistake perpetuated by Locke and reductive materialism (2.289–90).

²⁷⁹ Forster 1989 is the major study of Hegel and scepticism, supplemented by Trisokkas 2012 and Dudley 2003.

²⁸⁰ Translated in Di Giovanni and Harris 1985: 311–62; Speight 2008: 19–21 offers a short summary.

²⁸¹ Cf. *LP* 2.330: 'the logical Notion is itself this dialectic of Scepticism'.

²⁸² *LP* 2.376.

²⁸³ Scepticism gets 62 pages (in Haldane's translation), compared with Plato's 116, Aristotle's 114, Stoicism's 39, Epicureanism's 34, Neoplatonism's 77; compare Spinoza's 38, Leibniz's 24, Rousseau's 2, or Kant's 56 (by far the longest of the moderns).

but disdain: a psychological 'paralysis' and solipsism that 'properly speaking...cannot be refuted'.²⁸⁴ 'Thinking scepticism', however, ever demands respect. It finds determinate phenomena, judgments, and theories inadequate or contradictory, and concludes with the Academics' suspension of judgment, the Pyrrhonians' certainty of ignorance, or modern sceptics' assertion of the 'facts of consciousness'. Curiously, the latter with their *cogito* and *cogitata* are scorned as having 'not even a peasants' philosophy', as if a Hume or Schulze, prey to a 'vanity of consciousness', could only say, 'This is held by me to be true, my feeling, my heart is ultimate to me'. Such narcissistic 'shilly-shallying' is really 'the most wanton dogmatism', and surely inappropriate for a modern world made secure for science.²⁸⁵ But in antiquity, and especially under the dissolute conditions of the Roman world, the Sceptics' systematic critique of *everything* determinate (both objective phenomena and knowledge claims) was timely, rational, and necessary. Of all varieties of scepticism, the ancient 'alone is of a true, profound nature'.²⁸⁶

Sceptical attitudes, Hegel acknowledges, are as old as Homer, are evident in Bias, Zeno, Heraclitus, and Plato, as well as the Academies of Arcesilaus and Carneades. Scepticism proper begins with Pyrrho (a rather shadowy figure), is developed by Timon satirically, by Aenesidemus more philosophically, and by Sextus Empiricus most profoundly: his *Adversus Mathematicos* Hegel quotes and praises generously. Despite the seeming varieties of Academics, Pyrrhonists, and later Sceptics, in the end Hegel detects only minor differences, and all become variations of a single philosophy, which can be called Scepticism simply.²⁸⁷ Its basic idea is best expressed by Sextus, echoing the Protagorean dictum 'each reason is confronted by another, which holds equally good'.²⁸⁸ Any testimonies of sensation or thought can be set against each other so that nothing is certain: the same tower now looks round, now square; the snow looks white, yet thinking reckons it to be frozen water, hence colourless, hence black.²⁸⁹ The basic principle can be elaborated in different ways, and Hegel is most interested in how two schemes gather these ways into tables of tropes to

²⁸⁴ LP 2.328–9.

²⁸⁵ LP 2.332–3; cf. 2.347 and PS §78 (doubt as feeble 'shilly-shallying about this or that presumed truth': a dig at Descartes, Speight suggests (2008: 34)). 'Wanton dogmatism': 2.364 (with Dudley 2003: 99). 'Facts of consciousness': 2.286, 2.331, 2.359; cf. Wood 1991: 392–3 for its associations with Fichte, Fries, and Christian Schmidt.

²⁸⁶ LP 2.331. For more on 'the Superiority of Ancient over Modern Skepticism', see Forster 1996; cf. Fine 2000.

²⁸⁷ LP 2.339. Dudley 2003 further explores Hegel's sifting of these varieties.

²⁸⁸ LP 2.343. ²⁸⁹ LP 2.342–3.

undermine *any* determination. The ten Pyrrhonian tropes deal more with empirical *sensations*, subjective 'points of view', and the 'dogmatism of the common human understanding'.²⁹⁰ More impressive are the five later Sceptical tropes that undermine *ideas* and show how the understanding necessarily falls into antinomies and contradictions. Systematic in their universal deconstruction, showing the contradictions or 'negativity' *inherent* in all determinations, both empirical and ideal, they continue the higher dialectic in Plato's dialogues, foreshadow (surpass?) the antinomies of Kant's transcendental dialectic and anticipate Hegel's own logic.²⁹¹

In all, this systematic thinking about the necessary inadequacies of thinking forms a kind of negative logic, which the later Sceptics directed especially against Stoic abstract and Epicurean sensational criteria. But these were grounded in a negative stance towards a devalued externality, and so ancient scepticism becomes a negation of negativity—a 'self-relating negativity or infinite affirmation'.²⁹² Namely, the double negation of ancient scepticism and its proving 'with certainty the untruth of all' (including dogmatists' certainties) brings not nihilism, but unshakeable 'certainty of self'. This *ataraxia* is the 'freedom of self-consciousness through thought' that the other Schools had sought more directly and in vain, and so by enacting an inner critique of Stoic and Epicurean dogmatisms, Scepticism becomes their inner 'truth' and fulfilment.²⁹³ In its absolute inner freedom as 'thought of thought', Sceptic *ataraxia* also replays Aristotle's God, though it does not realize it. Nor does it realize the full promise of its inner affirmation. In its 'solitude', the sceptical mind understands itself as everything, the world nothing—nothing but eclectic moments within its own unlimited 'abyss'. Towards these indifferent contents, it remains indifferent: it creates no theories, no ways of life, but rests in its own wakeful calm. Yet because it 'immerses itself in itself as that which thinks', the sceptical self-consciousness is poised to be roused to its own truer, *dynamic* infinity—in Christianity and, more proximately, in Neoplatonism.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁰ LP 2.356, cf. 2.346. Hegel sees particular importance in the eighth trope, which relies on the 'relativity of everything' (2.353–4).

²⁹¹ Foreshadowing Kant: LP 2.365 (showing the 'necessary contradictions into which the understanding falls'); Forster 1996: 10 and Dudley 2003: 97 do not seem to notice the Kantian language. Surpassing Kant?: see 2.365–7 for Sextus' dialectical prowess.

²⁹² LP 2.331.

²⁹³ 'Untruth of all': LP 2.333. 'Certainty of self': 2.329. Free self-consciousness: 2.371.

²⁹⁴ Aristotle's God: LP 2.369, 2.452. Scepticism as 'truth' of Hellenistic schools and Roman world, matrix of Neoplatonism: 2.369–73. Self-immersion: 2.371.

5.4. The Neoplatonic Synthesis

In modern philosophy, as standardly narrated, the dogmatisms of Spinoza and Leibniz give way to Hume's scepticism only to find a fuller synthesis in post-Kantian idealism. For Hegel, this evolution is initially played out in Greek philosophy, where Stoic and Epicurean dogmatisms are reconciled with Sceptical critiques in the idealism of pure Neoplatonic reason, with Proclus prefiguring Hegel as grand synthesizer. Such comprehensive work needs appropriate conditions, and in Hegel's narrative the right place for overcoming sceptical despair at 'the loss of the world' is not the beautiful Aegean, but Egypt, and more especially the melting pot of Alexandria, where three continents meet, mingling peoples, religions and thought-systems—joining (in logico-historical terms) the 'free universality of the East and the determinateness of Europe'.²⁹⁵ No doubt much that was produced in Roman Egypt was 'dim and mystical', magpie collections of outlandish baubles. Yet it would also produce a 'higher' eclecticism, as Alexandrians complemented and completed Plato with ideas from Pythagorean, Peripatetic, Stoic, and other sources—in this sense, Plato too was an 'eclectic'—until finally, 'all earlier systems were merged' in the Neoplatonic system of the One.²⁹⁶ This comprehensive outlook has usually been called Neoplatonism, but could equally (Hegel suggests) be named the 'Alexandrian philosophy', or Neopythagoreanism, or, most fitting of all, Neo-Aristotelianism.²⁹⁷ Needless to say, it is also claimed as proto-Hegelian idealism: the trajectory from Philo through Gnostic sects to Plotinus and his successors reveals the UPI pattern internally, and is itself the final *individualization* of the universal principle developed up to Aristotle and then particularized in the Hellenistic Schools. Neoplatonism begins from the Sceptics' despair, and ends by completing the Greeks thinkers' millennial attempt to articulate the rational structure of all actual experience:

²⁹⁵ LP 2.380.

²⁹⁶ Diogenes Laertius (on Potamo of Alexandria) inspired Brucker to first call Alexandrian thought 'Eclecticism': LP 2.399–400. Plato's good eclecticism: 2.402. Hegel's thesis that Neoplatonism synthesizes 'all earlier philosophies' (2.402–3) and is indeed the 'concrete result of all that has gone before' (2.374)—*Aufhebung* of the universal culture garnered in the Library and Museum—revisits e.g. Porphyry's claims (*Vita Plotini* 14; cf. Hadot 1990), and looks forward to e.g. Inge 1923: I.10 and more detailed studies of Neoplatonist engagement with e.g. Presocratics (Stamatellos 2008), Stoicism (Graeser 1972), and Scepticism (Wallis 1987, O'Meara 2000).

²⁹⁷ LP 2.380–1; cf. 2.406, 2.429 (Plotinus has 'much more in common with Aristotle than with Plato').

The universal standpoint of the Neo-Platonic or Alexandrian philosophy now is from the loss of the world to produce a world which in its outwardness shall still remain an inward world, and thus a world reconciled; and this is the world of spirituality, which here begins. (LP 2.381)

The 'return to God' (the 'way up' of Greek philosophy) thus gives way to the 'manifestation of God' in all particulars²⁹⁸—a double movement that pre-figures modern thought's twin drive for theoretical unity and encyclopedic breadth.

Encyclopedic culture and singularity of vision certainly mark the man who sounded the keynote of Neoplatonism. A near contemporary of Augustus and Jesus, a Greek-speaker and a Jew, Hegel's Philo veritably embodied the confluence of cultures of Roman Egypt, and his thought is informed by such many-sided knowledge that he represents the first 'application of the universal consciousness as philosophical consciousness'.²⁹⁹ Reflecting the spiritual impatience of the times, he did not reverence traditional wisdom in its *immediacy* (in his case, Jewish scripture) and sought to pierce through the veil of its *ipsissima verba*. Hegel is little concerned with the details of Philo's allegories, but he does welcome the general approach, whether applied to scripture or to Homer, as akin to the 'work of the mind' itself, as it makes explicit what was implicit, and brings to articulate consciousness what was only diffusely felt before. Ancient books may contain ideas not deliberately or clearly expressed by the limited understanding of their authors, but the great reader descries them and 'reads them out' of their textual thickets.³⁰⁰ As such a reader, Philo's allegories are informed by the infinite perspective of Alexandrian thought: 'knowledge of God' is Philo's true starting point, and external scriptures are illumined by philosophical insights, as if from within.

What Philo brought to consciousness for his time was the interdependence of three realities: God, *Logos*, and Nature. In Jewish fashion, Philo's God is known as unknown. For when purified of body and rapt into that ecstasy which is 'God's influence', the soul beholds Him as pure Being and 'primordial light', a 'pure object of thought' with no inner differentiation: one knows 'that He is but not what He is'. This quasi-Oriental, quasi-Eleatic Being is simple, omnipresent. As primordial space and time, He 'fills all

²⁹⁸ LP 2.376.

²⁹⁹ LP 2.387.

³⁰⁰ LP 2.389; cf. EL §22 ('the business of philosophy consists merely in bringing explicitly to consciousness what has been valid for humanity since antiquity with respect to thinking').

other things and gives them coherence', but since there is nothing beyond Being, Philo's God 'fills Himself with Himself' and thus becomes a more concrete Absolute. From this concrete universal the second reality emerges, as its image—the Son, *Sophia*, or *Logos* of God, which for Philo *can* be known and is opposed to the pure unity of God, and which Hegel takes to be the necessary determination of His essence. Containing differences, moreover, this *Logos* is the 'innermost meaning of all Ideas', termed 'angels' (*aggeloi*) by Philo's pictorial imagination—the patterns of things before creation in this 'first restful world of thought'.³⁰¹ Brought forth like a more dynamic *logos prophorikos*, it expands into sensuous nature, grounded in matter or non-Being. For Philo, this makes nature an imperfect reflection of the Creator. For *Hegel's* Philo, 'the opposite of Being is just as positive as Being': *creatio ex nihilo* becomes creation within thought alone.³⁰² After this account of Creation, Philo can go on to allegorize Mosaic history down to the judges, kings, and prophets, through all of whom God is manifest—presumably with increasing definiteness, if Philo's many commentaries were arranged into a properly Hegelian philosophy of history. Here his philosophical study of sacred law and history would be another divine self-mediation, for scripture also is the divine *Logos* and wisdom, 'high priest' and 'mediator between God and man', educating humanity in its return to God.³⁰³

Kabbalistic and Gnostic literatures develop Philo's trinitarian scheme in a motley array of combinations. Here too there is always a first principle (either nameless or endlessly named), which differentiates itself into a second, and this into a third, each emanation being more concrete than the last until the solid-seeming earth is begotten, last of the worlds. Hegel gives a few details of the proliferating Gnostic sects and the fanciful names of their principles, and he includes the Gnostics as *philosophers*, not merely following Tennemann's lead, but because for all their seeming irrationalism, they too grasped the Idea, the 'profound necessity of reason, namely, the determination and comprehension of what is absolute as the concrete'.³⁰⁴ In turn, Hegel's own system has been read as a Gnostic tale of a logical *plerōma*

³⁰¹ LP 2.392.³⁰² LP 2.393.³⁰³ LP 2.392–3.

³⁰⁴ LP 2.399. According to Magee, Hegel read Brucker's account of the Kabbalah 'carefully' but does not adopt his Enlightenment hostility (2001: 166–7): Magee would explain away Hegel's seeming contempt for 'gnostic and Kabbalistic phantasmagorias' (EL §17) as not referring to the 'real Kabbalah' (2001: 167 n.36). The antinomy may be resolved if (as Hegel's ordering suggests) Gnosticism represents the moment of particularity and false infinity—seemingly opposed to, but in underlying agreement with, Philo and Neoplatonism, the latter being 'more philosophical and intelligent' than Gnosticism (2.399).

disrupted by a necessary fall into the self-externalities of nature before the slow reawakening of spirit through history. This Hegel, as 'Hermetic thinker', was shaped by the exuberant *gnōsis* of Eckhard, Bruno, Agrippa, Böhme, Rosicrucians, Romantic pantheists, alchemy, mesmerism: in these terms, even his *SL* has been compared to 'The Kabbalistic Tree'.³⁰⁵ Whether this designation fairly captures Hegel's vision, his account of ancient Gnosticism is hardly satisfactory. It softens the Gnostics' typical insistence on a sharp discontinuity between the One and fallen nature. It tendentially equates their *gnōsis* and *mystēria* with knowledge or 'speculative philosophy generally', and may therefore downplay differences with Neoplatonism and orthodox Christianity, as they too seek ways to articulate the rationality implicit in the 'mysteries'.³⁰⁶

Apart from Gnostics like Basilides, Hegel does not include Christian thinkers in his history of *ancient* philosophy, leaving the Patristics to his treatment of the medieval period.³⁰⁷ Even though Clement, Origen, and others were Alexandrians, Hegel hurries past them to Ammonius Saccas, and especially to Plotinus, the wellspring of Neoplatonism in its final phase.³⁰⁸ Like his Aristotle, Hegel's Plotinus tends to begin with particular phenomena but in examining them more self-consciously leads his students by rational dialectic 'back to one Idea'. Plotinus' work is unsystematic and repetitive and so it proves rather 'wearisome' to follow him through all fifty-four treatises: Hegel sums up the contents of the first *Ennead* to give a flavour of what is most important—Plotinus' 'pure enthusiasm for the elevation of mind . . . to the absolute'.³⁰⁹ This 'ecstasy', rather than the external criteria of Stoics and Epicureans, is Plotinus' 'point of departure'³¹⁰: it is as if, having inherited the accumulated insights of antiquity, he strove to live in the purity of thought itself. Plotinus' term for the soul's elevation to mystical union often misleads modern readers into confusing Plotinus and

³⁰⁵ Magee 2001 opens with the startling statement that 'Hegel is not a philosopher' (1): he professes to replace the desire for wisdom with actual *Wissenschaft*, or (as Magee puts it) a *pansophia* embracing all sciences; influenced immensely by Böhme, he is a Christian Gnostic (cf. Voegelin 1968: 40–4, 67–80, Hanratty 1984, 1987).

³⁰⁶ 'Speculative philosophy': *LP* 2.448. But see 2.427–8, 3.16–17 for criticisms of Gnosticism by Neoplatonists (e.g. Plotinus *Enneads* 2.9) and the Church.

³⁰⁷ *LP* 3.1–22, esp. 3.11–16 defending Patristics' philosophizing vis-à-vis Biblical fundamentalists: the notion of 'Christian philosophy' (on which see Karamanolis 2013: 13–19) is not for Hegel a 'crime' (3.11).

³⁰⁸ *LP* 2.404 (Origen mentioned; in *LP* 1, Clement is cited as a source, not a thinker, while Basil and Gregory are ignored). For Hegel and Neoplatonists, see e.g. Beierwaltes 1970, Halfwassen 1999, Cleary 2013.

³⁰⁹ *LP* 2.406–7.

³¹⁰ *LP* 2.408.

his Neoplatonic successors with world-denying visionaries—those ‘crazy Indians, Brahmins, monks, and nuns’³¹¹ of the Protestant imagination. For Hegel, there is a certain fanaticism (*Schwärmerei*) evident in *their* ascetic flight from determinate experience, but Plotinian ecstasy rises from dialectical insight, not physical exercises or prayer, and the charge is wholly unjustified. Yet when Plotinus tries to describe the ‘simplification’ and silent outreaching of the mind, into which there steals, as immanent source and transcendent end, a radical other and most intimate self, the One³¹²—concerning this most elusive Plotinian One Hegel shows little real interest, and even though he quotes the *Enneads* at great length, he pares Plotinus back to his own, more mundane monism. For this Plotinus, the One, as the unity of all dualities, transcends the *particular* mind—and yet as *thought* cannot exist beyond thinking *per se*, and indeed as pure essence constitutes the ecstatic purity of contemplation itself. Plotinian ecstasy therefore becomes ‘pure thought that is at home with itself, and is its own object’, or alternatively, ‘the Reason which is in and for itself’.³¹³ To this ‘absolute’, Hegel effectively offers his own *via negativa*. Neither ‘the All’, i.e. the aggregate of all entities; nor Spinozistic substance; nor the regulative Kantian Idea of the World—the Plotinian One is construed by Hegel almost like his own category of Being.³¹⁴ It is the determination that survives the sceptical stripping away of all others, the fundament of the categories. As such, the One is ‘essence of all essence’, the ‘middle point’ around which everything turns. It *can* be thought (regardless of what Plotinus says), but as merely abstract, ‘simple unity’ gains significance (like Philo’s Being) mainly as source for differentiation into the more concrete realities of Intellect (*Nous*), Soul, Nature, Matter, and Evil.³¹⁵

Thus, for Hegel, Plotinus’ One seems more lacking than over-full, more imperfect in its simple unity than over-perfect in its transcendence of division. An inchoate universal, this One must differentiate itself into the correlative particulars of active *noēsis* and passive *noēton*, which together constitute *nous*.³¹⁶ This articulated unity seems to appeal far more to Hegel

³¹¹ LP 2.408. ³¹² On such themes, see Rappe 2000, Dillon 2012.

³¹³ LP 2.412. Rappe 1996 explores self-reflexivity in Plotinus as a means of rising from individualized soul to universal *nous*; Descartes’s *cogito* is her counterpoint, but Hegel would have been a deeper interlocutor.

³¹⁴ LP 2.413.

³¹⁵ Being, ‘essence of essence’: LP 2.413. ‘Mittelpunkt’: 2.415. ‘Simple unity’: 2.416.

³¹⁶ Hegel’s translation of Plotinian *nous* as *Verstand* (1970: 19.448ff; Haldane’s ‘finite understanding’) seems sloppy—given that Hegel associates *Verstand* with the fixed opposition of subject and object, which *Vernunft* reconciles. Inge’s translations are quite Hegelian: Plotinus’

than the ineffable One, tacitly ignoring Plotinus' own argument that as both thinker and thought and hence not fully one, the Aristotelian divine *nous* cannot be the highest *archē*.³¹⁷ How the One differentiates itself as *nous* is the great question, unanswered by the ancients³¹⁸ and Hegel is unimpressed by metaphors of 'overflowing' and 'emanation'. Nevertheless, he agrees with Plotinus that *nous* is the synthesis of Aristotle's *Noēsis Noēseōs* with a unified Platonic realm of Ideas: *nous* is that 'place of forms' in which Ideas persist both as the objects of thinking and constitutive of it.³¹⁹ These *noēta* are to *nous* as elements are to a physical compound. Both can be analysed out logically, yet are so thoroughly imbued by their relations with other thoughts/elements and with the whole that they are at once 'diverse and yet entirely one'; each *noēton*, fully understood, implies all others, and the life of *nous* grasps all in each, eternally: such could apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to *SL* and on *Enneads* 4.9, for instance.³²⁰ For Plotinus, of course, Plato's 'greatest kinds' (and, at a lower level, Aristotle's categories) are the prominent *noēta* that *noēsis* generates in its struggle to understand its own unity as image of the One. For Hegel, the *noēta* are more determinately articulated and unified in *SL*, and though he hints there at an immediate, noetic grasp of these thought-determinations in the Idea, he does not envision that that highest level of thinking opens onto an ontologically higher level (i.e. the One) *beyond* thinking. If so, his Absolute Idea bears less relation to this than to a thoroughly unified Plotinian *nous*.³²¹

The supreme *henosis* is also less important for Hegel than the relation between logic and nature, or, somewhat analogously, between Plotinus' *nous* and soul. For Plotinus, *nous* in contemplative striving to realize its unity generates *soul* as a more diffuse image of its inner dynamism; since self-moving soul governs the cosmos, heavenly and organic bodies, and even the inanimate, all visible nature, particular individuals, and perhaps even entities like matter and evil, become an external image of *nous*, and hence a diffuse image of an image of the One. Taking up Platonic language about

Nous becomes 'Spirit', while to *agathon*, to *hen*, to *prōton* become 'the Absolute' (1923: Lectures XIV–XVI and XVII–XIX, respectively).

³¹⁷ See e.g. Plotinus *Enneads* 3.8.9 and 5.4.1. ³¹⁸ *LP* 2.416.

³¹⁹ See *LP* 2.418–19 with, for example, Plotinus *Enneads* 5.9.8.

³²⁰ On this point Hegel cites *Enneads* 5.1.9, 6.1.2 (*LP* 2.419), to which might be added e.g. *Enneads* 5.8.4: 6–11: *nous* 'has everything in itself and sees all things in every other, so that all are everywhere and each and every one is all and the glory unbounded' (tr. Armstrong).

³²¹ On Plotinian *nous* as 'the decisive historical precursor' of Hegel's Idea, see Halfwassen 2019.

thought as the most primal type of 'motion', Hegel agrees tacitly with Plotinus that *nous* somehow transmits its own unity and spontaneous energy to soul in its cascading varieties: undescended soul, world-Soul, rational, animal, and vegetative souls become each principles of motion and unity to the realities 'beneath' them. Yet while unity remains Plotinus' leading idea, he relies (in Hegel's critical summary) on 'many-coloured pictures'³²² rather than pure thought itself, and is not able to *prove* Leibniz's quasi-Plotinian tenet, *Dum Deus calculat, mundus fit*. Hegel's paraphrase of Plotinus' derivation will attempt to make up the deficiency by stressing the *self-reflexivity* of thinking:

This turning round on itself of the overflow from itself, this thinking of itself, is the eternal creation of the world. Their [sensuous things'] existence is nothing else than this very fact of their being the object of thought of the Divine understanding; they are moments of thought, and, for this very reason, of Being.³²³

Thus Plotinian emanation and the principle that 'what is here is there'—that phenomenal reality has its cause in a higher hypostasis—slide into Hegelian language of the Concept that evolves dialectically into its seeming opposite and remains there as its hidden essence.

Plotinus may hesitate to fully assimilate such realities as matter, ugliness, and evil to the One, but in Hegel's presentation any hesitation between lingering dualism and a more robust monism are explained by the weakness of the times. From this perspective, Plotinus' analyses of matter and evil are generally true, but not adequately explicated. As the principle of sensuous differentiation that itself lacks determinations, Plotinus' matter seems ostensibly to Hegel the 'negative of thought'—either of *nous*, which contains all essential determinations, or of the undifferentiated One—for as 'the Notion of pure indeterminateness', and allied to non-Being, matter is also an idea.³²⁴ Associated with matter as the utter attenuation of the One, evil for Plotinus arises when entities turn from the One, are imbued with materiality, and so dissipate into the discrete and separate. Here evil is not a second fundamental principle, but a negation, a poor 'image of the existent'. As such, evil becomes the mirror opposite of the highest Good or One. For Hegel himself, evil arises when the particular will (e.g. of the hypocrite) absolutizes itself;

³²² LP 2.429. ³²³ LP 2.421; cf. 2.429.

³²⁴ LP 2.422–3. 'Negative of thought': 2.425.

more metaphysically, the 'negativity' of contingency emerges as a necessary moment in a totality that, as infinite, embraces all opposites. That thought may be adumbrated in Plotinus' argument that evil must exist as quasi-independent, the 'counterpart to the Good, necessary to its production'.³²⁵ Yet despite this partial overlap with his own position, Hegel will repeat of Plotinus what he says of Greek thinkers generally: denizens of beauty, their understanding of evil is shallow, and though Plotinus reflects on the question 'from many sides', he too 'does not yet go very far'. Plotinus' thinking on evil, matter, and nature was bound to be shallow because as an ancient travelling the 'way up', his 'sole and constant aim' is to elevate the human soul to first principles, rather than explicate them in their concreteness.³²⁶

Thus, what is most lacking in Plotinus for Hegel is a fully systematic, rational approach. There is more of Aristotle's categorizations in him than Plato's dialectic;³²⁷ he, and the Neoplatonists generally, do not explain how one hypostasis develops into the next, and cannot even articulate with modern precision the all-important problem of how the One goes over to *Nous*.³²⁸ They rely rather on sensuous images and figurative language: 'severance, emanation, effluence or process, emergence, occurrence', out-flowing and overflowing (as of fragrance, water, heat, cold, light), or even the falling of the soul past the stars, Saturn, and planets down to the cold, gritty earth. Proto-trinitarian language of the One as Father, or of *Nous* as the begotten 'eternal son', may gratify the imagination, but not reason.³²⁹ Even more fundamental is the error of beginning with an undifferentiated One from which 'the many' cannot possibly be derived: better to begin with a more concrete unity like Aristotle's (Hegelian) God, whose inner articulations ground concrete development. Again, Hegel's reading tends to erase the need and longing for a higher hypostasis in an ineffable One. Nevertheless, despite these inadequacies, Hegel generously praises Plotinus for having 'truly determined the nature of the Idea in all its moments'.³³⁰ Indeed, his adumbration of the Proclean triad of *monē-proodos-epistrophē* anticipates Hegel's triad of *an-sich*, *für-sich*, and *an-und-für sich*, and one might even hazard a (very rough) comparison of his hierarchy of civic, purgative, and intellectual virtues with the Hegelian progression from customary Greek *Sittlichkeit* to Roman discipline and Kantian *Moralität*.³³¹

³²⁵ LP 2.427. Poor 'image': 2.426.

³²⁶ Shallow: LP 2.425. 'Constant aim': 2.422. Not concrete: e.g. 2.378.

³²⁷ LP 2.429.

³²⁸ LP 2.415–16; on the question, see Bussanich 1988.

³²⁹ 'Emanation', metaphors: LP 2.429. 'Eternal son': 2.418.

³³⁰ LP 2.418.

³³¹ Triads: Chlup 2012: 284.

On the figures between Plotinus and Proclus, Hegel spends little time. Porphyry's *Introduction to the Organon of Aristotle* has won glory as 'the textbook of Aristotelian Logic', the basis of essentially all 'ordinary books of logic'. Yet both Porphyry and Iamblichus combined this attention to the logic of the understanding with a fascination with magic, Pythagorean number mysticism, and theurgy. They write fabulous biographies of Plotinus and Pythagoras, in which Iamblichus especially exudes 'mistiness and confusion': in him 'thought sinks into imagination, the intellectual universe to a kingdom of demons and angels...and speculation comes down to the methods of magic'.³³² Proclus too was fascinated with pagan lore, learned from Asclepigenia, his own study, and even the gods themselves: Hermetic literature, Orphic hymns, the Orphic and Chaldaean oracles, the mysteries, festivals and holy days of countless cities and countries—all these Proclus absorbed in his reverence for the divine in its multifarious manifestations. So this 'universal hierophant of the whole world'—Proclus' own definition of a philosopher—was credited even with commanding nature and performing miracles: a common conceit for consciousness at the time. Nevertheless, Proclus' writings show none of the imaginative excess of an Iamblichus or Marinus, and reveal instead a 'profoundly speculative man' who 'lived, so to speak, in the worship of science'³³³—Plotinian ecstasy grown even more precise. Ostensibly commentaries on Plato and others, works like *Platonic Theology* (his 'most interesting work') and *Institutio theologica* represent a veritable *summa* of ancient thought. If Hegel recognized in Proclus a kindred spirit, who recast the whole ancient world into the grey prose of philosophy, Fichte would name Hegel the 'German Proclus' and J.B. Bury dub Proclus 'The Hegel of Neoplatonism'.³³⁴

Despite his admiration for Proclus as a religiously-minded system-builder, Hegel does not mention Proclus' hostility to Christianity: a startling omission. He prefers, rather, to praise the dialectical facility of his *Platonic*

³³² LP 2.432. In fact, the whole school (not excluding Plotinus himself), with its 'worship of images', its 'miracle-working and sorcery', 'cannot be altogether absolved' from the 'reproach of 'fanaticism' (2.409–10). On theurgy, see Shaw 1995. Logic 'textbook': LP 2.431.

³³³ LP 2.435. 'Hierophant': 2.434.

³³⁴ Bury 1923 [1889]: I.13. Hegel's dictum, the 'owl of Minerva only flies at dusk', applies most to Aristotle, Proclus, and himself—who philosophized in the twilight of the *polis*, Roman Empire, and early modernity, respectively. Beierwaltes' classic study of Proclus (1979) has been described as 'very Hegelian in its selection of topics' (Chlup 2012: 284). Cleary 2013: 543–64 juxtaposes Proclus and Hegel as mathematical and logical system-builders, respectively. Commentaries as prime genre of Neoplatonic philosophizing: LP 2.403, 433–4.

Theology, ‘most excellent and best that was formulated by any of the Neo-Platonists’.³³⁵ Here Proclus improves upon the arguments in Plato’s *Parmenides* by demonstrating, more positively, how ‘one’ and ‘many’ mutually involve each other—as manifestations of the One.³³⁶ Furthermore, the proliferating sub-triads of each hypostasis, constituted according to the fourfold principles of Plato’s *Philebus*, yield a whole (allegedly) not dissimilar from Hegel’s own vision of being and knowledge as ‘circles’ within self-similar ‘circles’: each level is both complete in itself, yet unified with all others, and so the whole becomes a totality whose parts are each mirroring totalities.³³⁷ Hegel also praises Proclus for placing ‘spirit’ (*nous*) *after* ‘life’ (*zoē*) in each trinitarian progression: later hypostases are more differentiated and ‘richer’,³³⁸ as for Hegel, analogously, Spirit (*~nous*) supervenes upon Logic (*~Being*) and Nature (*~zoē*) as their emergent ‘truth’. Reading Proclus’ unified triads in this way, Hegel would resist the common criticism that he deduces ‘a logical unity alone, a unity of thought and not of actuality’.³³⁹ At the same time, there is something merely formal and external about Proclus’ dialectic. It is ‘most wearisome’, and though his work achieves an ‘intellectual system’ clearer and more developed than Plotinus’ *Enneads*, his One is as barrenly undifferentiable as Plotinus’, and so without a concrete grasp of Hegel’s own Concept, leaves ‘much to be desired’.³⁴⁰ The criticism might be levelled against Hegel’s own presentation of Proclus, which is itself rather scattered—at least in the lectures as edited by Michelet.

5.5. The Unfinished Synthesis

Thus ends my critical summation of Hegel’s summation of ancient philosophy. Ideally this would be a *summa summarum*, a distillation of a distillation that would yield up the purest quintessence. In fact, not all of Hegel’s readings can fully resist one’s sceptical impulses: too quick, too strained, too detailed, not detailed enough. That by water, number, or atom the Presocratics suggested a self-determining Idea; that pure thinking was first embodied in Socrates; that Aristotle’s God underlies Hellenistic and Neoplatonic systems; that Plotinus’ and Proclus’ hypostases are wholly compatible with the Christian Trinity—are argued ingeniously, or

³³⁵ LP 2.440.

³³⁶ LP 2.436–9.

³³⁷ LP 2.439–50; cf. 2.452.

³³⁸ LP 2.443; cf. 2.449. On Proclus’ ‘intelligible triad’, see Chlup 2012: 92–9; cf. Edwards 1990.

³³⁹ LP 2.437.

³⁴⁰ LP 2.435. ‘Wearisome’: 2.436.

tendentiously, or merely insinuated, and may not fully convince. At worst, Hegel sometimes commits the sin he condemns in Brucker and Tennemann: projecting his own thought-patterns too impulsively onto the ancient material. Yet one cannot convict him of inconsistency or superficiality. His larger argument is that there is only one reality; of this Mind, all else are moments, and so collective and individual minds take on their energy from the one Spirit animating and encompassing them. Because Mind is internally differentiated, a plurality of minds are necessary for its full expression. Greek philosophy is the first leg of this self-evolution, which Hegel ever regards as the 'way up' from natural substance to absolute, thinking subjectivity. In this progression, the Neoplatonic outlook is 'not a philosophic freak'³⁴¹ but the distillation and culmination of ten or more centuries of thought. After the mediating influence of Greek art and Roman religion, philosophical *Erinnerung* has further spiritualized the experience of Hegel's ancients, such that by the time Justinian closed the Academy in 529 AD,

the sensuous world has disappeared and the whole been raised into spirit, and this whole has been called God and His life in it. Here we witness a great revolution, and with this the first period, that of Greek philosophy, closes. (LP 2.451)

This end is not quite an end, however, for the Neoplatonic outlook was dominant through medieval thought, and has endured 'until comparatively recent times' in Catholic teachings.³⁴² A really consistent Hegelian (one surmises) might argue that medieval Christendom inaugurated the second period of Western philosophy, by translating the abstract One (or *nous*) into more sensuous forms, with its missionary work, monasteries, legal codes, cathedrals, stained glass, plainsong, illuminated manuscripts, scriptural commentaries, and theological *summae*—all of which aim to manifest the glory of God in each detail and for each person. If Greek philosophy fairly attained the Idea in its abstract universality, this medieval Roman Catholic world would correspond roughly to its manifestation in natural particularity. Hegel himself fairly belittles the medieval contribution. As if traversing some barren ocean, he skims over medieval theology 'with seven-league boots', according insultingly little to such Leviathans of thought as Origen, Augustine, Eriugena, Aquinas, Cusanus—until he can alight at last on the

³⁴¹ LP 2.452.

³⁴² LP 2.451.

terra firma of Spinoza's monism, which revives the absolute principle achieved by Neoplatonism in a more subjective Cartesian vein.³⁴³ In this truncated history, Greek philosophy is the first and only truly significant precedent to its modern 'Germanic' counterpart.

In some respects, the Greek philosophers can rise higher in Hegel's estimations than their heirs: two thirds of *LP* are given over to them, with medieval and modern thinkers squeezed into the remaining third; Parmenides' dictum of the unity of thought and being is foundational—and often elided by subjective moderns; Heraclitus' dynamic unity of opposites impresses itself on every aspect of the *SL*; Socrates is the first originator of *Moralität*; Plato and Aristotle are 'the teachers of the human race';³⁴⁴ ancient scepticism is superior to its subjective *epigones*; the Proclean 'trinity of trinities' epitomizes ancient philosophy and across the abyss of centuries resonates powerfully with Hegel's own system. In lavishing attention on such 'heroes of thought',³⁴⁵ and seeking to integrate the three stages of ancient philosophy (Thales to Aristotle, Hellenistic Schools, Alexandrian Neoplatonism) into a single logico-historical narrative of Mind in its highest reaches, Hegel certainly outdoes himself: for all its shortcomings, *LP* may be his best lecture series, and remains one of the most challenging and rewarding histories of philosophy.

³⁴³ Compare e.g. *LP* 2.452 and 3.157–61. 'Seven-league boots': *LP* 3.1; cf. 3.158.

³⁴⁴ *LP* 2.1; cf. 2.118 (Aristotle was 'for centuries... the instructor of all philosophers').

³⁴⁵ *LP* 1.1.

6

History, Cosmos, Mind, and (Not Quite) Everything

Heirs of the Greeks and Romans? Of Christianity? All this seems as nothing to those cynics; but heirs of the world-process! Summit and goal of the world-process! Meaning and solution of all the riddles of becoming, come to expression in modern man, the ripest fruit on the tree of knowledge!—this I name a pompous sort of elation; by this sign are the first-born of all times to be known, even if they have also arrived right at the end. The contemplation of history has never flown so far, not even in dreams; for now human history is just the continuation of plant and animal history; indeed, in the lowest depths of the sea the historical universalist finds the traces of his own self, as living slime; he gazes in astonishment (as if at a miracle) at the monstrous path, which mankind has already traversed, and his eye grows dizzy before the even more astonishing miracle—modern man himself, who has the ability to survey this path. He stands high and proud on the pyramid of the world-process. As he lays the capstone of his knowledge on the top there, he seems to call out to nature listening all around, ‘We are at the goal, we are the goal, we are nature perfected’.

Nietzsche, *Use and Abuse of History*

6.1. History and Philosophy

A history of the world was the task that Sir Walter Raleigh, *uomo universale*, set himself as he whiled away a decade of leisure in the Tower of London. He completed an account from Creation to 168 BC. Then, according to one anecdote, a fight broke out in the courtyard below his room. Curious about what exactly had happened, he spoke with other witnesses. Their accounts differed markedly, from each other and his own eye-witness. Drawing the

inevitable conclusion, Raleigh gave up his *Historie of the World*, and turned to more manageable projects, like translating Catullus. The vastness of the world did not so overawe Hegel, who despite not having circumnavigated the globe, or even the Mediterranean, lectured on world history for years with flair and confidence: in the fullness of time, informed by the testimony and analysis of others, but bringing to the manifold materials of the past the highest of perspectives, the enlightened thinker can so overreach his own perspective as to understand all others, and contemplate the earth and its history as if it were a single thought.

The Heracleian nature of the task may explain why Hegel did not begin to lecture on world history until his Berlin professorship.¹ As edited and published, his *LH* seem most ostensibly a continuation of *PR*: the concept of 'the' rational state grounds study of its progressive emergence in human time. In this regard, *LH* follows the traditional historiographical assumption that the state is the unit of history, wars and 'great men' its most important material. Yet the lectures themselves range beyond high politics to tackle potentially all aspects of a people's 'spirit' or culture—geography, law, art, religion, philosophy. It is as if Hegel envisioned his philosophical world-history to be the capstone of his system, the key to all histories, knitting the fundamentals of thematic and national histories into a single narrative, in which all *their* 'concepts' and national 'spirits' become moments in the self-evolution of Spirit itself.²

History as the 'development of Spirit', philosophical world-history as the true theodicy: the magniloquent formulas are easy to repeat, and caricature. But Hegel's underlying argument is a many-sided one, not easily dismissed: history has become, is, and must be a branch of 'philosophy', for thinking about the human past (i.e. history) is inevitably a moment within philosophy's systematic thinking about thinking. The argument is presented most concisely in his typology of histories as *original*, *reflective*, and *philosophical*—a progression from naïve identification with objective *res gestae*, through a somewhat alienated reflection on them, to a final, critical evaluation of one's sources and organizing categories. Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Caesar, and Guicciardini become the main exemplars of *original history*, in which writers are imbued with the

¹ See McCarney 2000: 6 on the five lecture series (1822–3, 1824–5, 1826–7, 1828–9, 1830–1), their four editors, and the merits of the various editions.

² Capstone: Gans's 1837 Preface (in Hoffheimer 1995) is instructive in making *LH* the late-emerging culmination of Hegel's system.

spirit that shaped the events they record. The 'great captains and statesmen' of antiquity seem to come recommended above the medieval bishops and monks, and in the more reflective modern period, the genre finds only rare exemplars (Frederick the Great, Cardinal de Retz). Here one senses that Tacitus, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Procopius would be more appropriate instances of the type than Herodotus, whose far-ranging, cosmopolitan work often borders on *reflective universal history*, where the author's diverse materials exceed his intuitive grasp. This second, more mediated sub-type of history is exemplified for Hegel by Livy and Diodorus Siculus, and while he mentions Johannes von Müller, figures like Plutarch, Cassius Dio, and even Gibbon are passed over.³ Reflective history may become *pragmatic* when it studies the past to find lessons for the present, but for Hegel all that such history teaches is that 'peoples and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it':⁴ here von Müller is criticized explicitly, ancients like Thucydides and Livy implicitly, while the loudest scorn is reserved for those French revolutionaries who modelled themselves on Greek and Roman patriots, or sought direct parallels in ancient history. 'Disgusted' with the facile philosophizing prevalent especially in French histories, Hegel associates *reflective critical history* with Germany, where a 'history of history' and 'higher criticism' extracts from the records unspoken assumptions and facts.⁵ Unfortunately, this thinking history often spawns 'anti-historical monstrosities', as historians foist their own idiosyncratic assumptions upon the data—a fault too common (in Hegel's barbed quips) among classical philologists, Roman jurists, historians of philosophy, and biblical scholars.⁶ Such critical history can become *a priori* in the worst sense, as it adopts the wrong categories of interpretation, and rides roughshod over given materials: petty minds project their own petty perspectives onto the past, whose complexities they are too weak to sift. The problem, one might say, is not that the perspective imposed is

³ As are lost works by Ephorus and others. On Gibbon and the Enlightenment-style 'philosophic history' of Hume, Robertson, and others, see Burrow 2009: 331–66. In *LH* Hegel alludes only to Plutarch's *Lycurgus* (*LH* 262) and *Agis and Cleomenes* (277), though he finds the *Lives* generally to have 'the deepest interest' for study of the dissolution of the Roman Republic. He does not take the *Parallel Lives* in aggregate (from Theseus and Romulus down to Otho) as a kind of reflective world-history. Herodotus as 'world-historian': MacKendrick 1954. Tacitus is 'the Roman historian' (*LH* 316) but is given no explicit place within the typology.

⁴ *LH* 6. ⁵ *LH* 7; cf. *EM* §549.

⁶ Exasperation with the subjective assumptions of Wolf (*LA* 2.1049–50, 2.1087, *LP* 2.72), Niebuhr (*LH* 10–11, 279–80: 'Niebuhr's *History* can only be regarded as a criticism of Roman history'), and theologians (10–11) can make Hegel prefer more uncritical historians (*LH* 7, 279, *LP* 1.291).

subjective, but that it is not subjective *enough*: the critical historian has not searched himself enough and discovered in himself categories universal to every mind and adequate to every event.⁷ Yet at least in seeking for such categories reflective history forms a transition to those intellectual histories that organize diverse materials under the *right* general ideas. With a bow to Montesquieu and surely also to Winckelmann and Meyer—perhaps even his own lectures on art, religion, and philosophy—Hegel praises those historians who explicate facts in the light of a *true* general concept, and thus anticipate his own effort to construe all history in the light of *the* Concept.⁸ In sum, Hegel's threefold typology amounts to an argument that history, as a form of thinking, was, is, and should be a subspecies of concrete philosophical thinking. Here is a criticism of naïve positivism, an assertion of the inevitability of theory-laden observations, and of the inevitability of theoretical frameworks, whether adequate to the material or not.⁹ Its two premises—that history in its internal development becomes ever more 'philosophical', and that philosophy becomes more historically concrete—thus postulate the convergence and synthesis of two distinct, even opposing approaches.

Philosophers for their part have not traditionally privileged history *per se* as a mode of knowledge: in the Cave are shadows, not worth tracing in detail (Plato); history is less philosophical than poetry, because enmeshed in sheer particulars (Aristotle), and at best is 'philosophy with examples' (Dionysius); its 'memorable deeds' may 'elevate' the mind (Descartes), or, as a systematic record of remembered facts, provide philosophy with materials (Bacon); for Locke, 'antiquity and history' are sources of 'story and talk' but not true knowledge and virtue; hence Kant scorns to 'make [his] head into a parchment and scribble old, half-effaced information from archives on it', and Fichte 'would rather count peas than study history'. On the other hand, Plato's dialogues ostensibly offer a selective history of Socrates' intellectual life and times, while his *Critias* has been regarded as a miniature

⁷ Hegel's criticism of critical history resurfaces in Droysen, for whom it is incomplete because 'not critical enough', in Beiser's paraphrase (2011: 309).

⁸ Thematic histories (of art, religion, philosophy) as moments of world history: *PR* §341; cf. *LA* 2.1236–7, *LH* 7–8. Other thematic histories included A. Schlegel's *Über dramatische Kunst und Literatur* (1809), F. Schlegel's *Geschichte der alten und neuen Literatur* (1812), and Savigny's *Geschichte der römische Recht im Mittelalter* (1815–30).

⁹ A 'simply receptive attitude' is impossible; each historian 'brings his categories with him, and sees the phenomena... exclusively through these media': *LH* 11; cf. *LP* 3.13–14.

philosophical history.¹⁰ Aristotle often prefaces his works with a mini-history of former positions. Despite a preference for Cartesian geometry, Hobbes translated Thucydides and composed *Behemoth*. Despite his sceptical *Enquiries*, Hume went on to write *The History of England*, in six volumes. Perhaps most importantly, Kant's interest in the potential of reflective judgment to bridge natural necessity and moral freedom would help make history philosophically respectable, and indeed systematically necessary for admirers like Herder, Schiller, the Schlegels, Schelling, and others.¹¹

Hegel's doctrine of the historically self-evolving Spirit responds to this whole philosophical tradition, especially its Kantian coda. It belongs equally to the emerging historicism which sought to understand past phenomena in their *own* terms and organic natures, as they 'grow' out of the unique soil of their times.¹² Here the Enlightenment encyclopedic ideal gains a more properly historical dimension, as writers learn greater reverence for the diversity and uniqueness of human experiences, and recognize that the 'light of reason' may be refracted, like rays through a prism, by the multifarious media of geography, custom, genius, and accident. In his lectures (as we have seen), Hegel lists and critiques sources, stresses autopsy and knowing languages (for *immediate* contact with the past), and the discipline of submerging one's subjectivity in the past's objective reality. Such sympathetic *Verstehen* and *Hineinverstehen* would be elaborated by Droysen, Dilthey, Collingwood, and others, and remind one that though no professional historian Hegel is certainly the 'historical philosopher' *par excellence*: one whose many-sided reflections on history and historical knowledge

¹⁰ See Dombrowski 1981; cf. R.G. Bury 1951, Morgan 2012. For Hegel, the *Critias* 'was intended to represent the ideal history of human culture, and to be a philosophical history of the human race' (LP 2.49). On Aristotle as a historical thinker, see e.g. R. Weil 1964.

¹¹ Kant's most important work here is his programmatic *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View* (1784). Its 'Eighth Proposition'—'The history of the human race as a whole can be regarded as the realisation of a hidden plan of nature to bring about . . . [a] perfect political constitution as the only possible state within which all natural capacities of mankind can be developed completely' (1991a: 50)—prefigures the Hegelian evolution from determined Nature to self-determining Spirit (cf. McCarney 2000: 135). On Kant and the philosophy of history, see Beck 1963: vii–xxvi.

¹² The historicist revolution was a predominantly German one: see Beiser 2011; cf. Butterfield 1955: 32–61, Meinecke 1965. *Qua* historicist, Hegel writes: 'No man can overleap his time, the spirit of his time is his spirit also' (LP 2.96; cf. LP 1.45 et al.); on his historicism, see Beiser 1993.

warrant attention from historians reflecting on their craft, and from philosophers awake to the historicity of much or all thought.¹³

The historicist awakening in Hegel's Germany may explain the appearance of a meta-historical work like L. Wachler's *Geschichte der historischen Forschung und Kunst* (1812–20), the first systematic history of modern history. Hegel too offers a history of histories, if it is fair to say that his threefold typology tends to mirror the development of historiography itself. For roughly speaking, it progresses from Oriental annals and king-lists through to the philosophical histories inspired by the Kantian critical project. More specifically, the Persians were the 'first historical people', but Herodotus remains the 'Father of History', and it is from Greek sources (e.g. Herodotus, Ctesias, Arrian) that one finds the first reliable and significant sources about Africa, India, Persia, and Egypt. By a rough reckoning, Hegel includes more Greek exemplars for *original* and Roman-era ones for *universal* history, while France is explicitly associated with *pragmatic* history, and Germany with *critical* and *philosophical* history.¹⁴ Interestingly, however, although this history of history sees it evolve in complexity from the Orient to modern Europe, Hegel reserves his most unstinted praise for the original historians—best represented by Herodotus and Thucydides:

Of these historians, whom we must make thoroughly our own, with whom we must linger long, if we would live with their respective nations, and enter deeply into their spirit: of these historians, to whose pages we may turn not for the purposes of erudition merely, but with a view to deep and genuine enjoyment, there are fewer than might be imagined. (LH 3)

Hegel himself lingered fairly long with his Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Caesar, Livy, and Tacitus: sources informing, and read through, Hegel's own sense of the Greek and Roman 'spirits'. Is it because

¹³ For use of terms like *hineinverstehen* ('to understand one's way into' material), *hineinvorstellen*, *hineinempfinden*, *hineinfühlen*, see e.g. LR 2.271. Droysen: Beiser 2011: 297–303. Collingwood: Dray 1999, Carr 1990 [1961]: 21–6. For Hegel, 'only spirit fully comprehends spirit': an idea operative among Winckelmann's admirers, like A. Schlegel for whom 'to feel the ancients as we ought, we must have become in some degree one of themselves, and breathed as it were the Grecian air' (1876 [1809]: Lecture III). 'The philosophical historian': McCarney 2000: 53; cf. 5.

¹⁴ *Original history*: four Greeks (Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius) versus four others (Caesar, Guicciardini, Frederick, Cardinal de Retz). *Universal history*: two Romans (Livy, Diodorus Siculus) versus one other (Johannes von Müller, widely known as the 'Swiss Tacitus'). French *pragmatic history* and German *critical history*: LH 6–7.

of his long lingering with the ancient authors themselves that he felt no need to mention intermediaries like Gibbon—a name conspicuously absent from *LH*?

6.2. Hegel's Greece and Rome in World History

Previous chapters focused on political, artistic, religious, and philosophical themes. Let us now attempt to sum up more holistically Hegel's sense of the centrality of Greece and Rome in a world-historical context. This context is indeed 'the whole' in which the human-divine Spirit displays both much variety and a long-term continuity, as it is refracted among so many seemingly disparate cultures. For Hegel, world-history is a single, intelligible whole that can be grasped as a linear narrative, as Spirit evolves from natural immediacy to subjective universality, simplicity to complexity, East to West: five thousand years are as a single day from the perspective of the 'divine' Concept. Hegel's 'sun' rises on the Oriental world, progresses over the Greek and Roman Mediterranean, and sets upon modern Germanic Europe, which thus is said to mark the end of history, politically, artistically, religiously, philosophically.¹⁵ Each of these four fundamental civilizations or 'worlds' is unified by its own *distinctive* 'spirit' (we might say 'culture') that thoroughly suffuses its customs, art, religion, ideas. At the same time, each distinct spirit exhibits the *same* basic tripartite pattern of development: each (1) begins in a state of natural immediacy and evolves to integrate its given elements into a distinctive synthesis, when (2) at its acme, it comes into contact with its 'predecessor' which it overcomes, before (3) encountering its own successor and being in turn overcome. Each world is therefore at once self-mediating, bound to its neighbours by war and cultural commerce, and at a still deeper level implicated in *all* others as spiritual kin: each national spirit is a moment in the World-spirit, which animates each civilization in turn, so that each has its moment in the sun, as it were, when it shines forth as the most advanced and progressive, before fading away into extinction or irrelevance.

This notion of a succession of divinely sanctioned worlds, empires, or kingdoms was, at Hegel's time, both cutting-edge and ancient. Emerging nationalism could appeal to Herder's thesis that each nation has its own distinctive character and historical mission. Older was Joachim de Fiore's

¹⁵ 'Europe is absolutely the end of history': *LH* 103.

vision of history as comprising epochs of the Father, Son, and Spirit.¹⁶ To these may be added the even older trope of a series of world-empires: the notion that Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Germans have each taken centre-stage as favourites of the divine *Logos* stretches from medieval historians back to Orosius, Augustine, Jerome, and Eusebius, even to Philo, the Books of Revelations and Daniel, as well as Greek sources such as Herodotus.¹⁷ This ancient trope of a *translatio imperii* Hegel reworks into his progression of favoured national 'spirits', each of which becomes unwitting material for Spirit's own greater self-realization. Most important here are the (allegedly) higher cultures of Europe: the Greeks with their democracies, anthropomorphic *Kunstreligion*, and free philosophical thinking first liberated mankind from nature; the Romans' discipline, lawful empire, deepening subjectivity, and purposive religion provided the matrix for the essential completion of that liberation in Neoplatonism and Christianity; finally, the descendants of the ancient Germanic tribes would in medieval and modern history develop ancient Christianity and philosophy to their self-conscious culmination.

Much of this is, again, not at all idiosyncratic to Hegel. The pairings of Greek–Roman, Roman–Germanic, and Greek–German seemed natural to classical philologists (e.g. Wolf), medieval and modern historians (e.g. Savigny, Ranke), and philhellenes (Goethe, Hölderlin), respectively, while the emergence of Oriental studies (long implicit in biblical scholarship) made the Oriental–Greek polarity crucial for Creuzer, for instance. Indeed, one surmises that these four designations remained dominant well into twentieth-century histories of Europe and its global hinterlands. Eurocentric world-histories often follow the ostensibly significant progression from the very old cradles of 'the East' (Mesopotamia, Egypt, China) through to Greece, Rome, the medieval and modern worlds. Three examples include authoritative textbooks by Leonhard Schmitz (1855), Hutton Webster (1947), and Greer and Lewis (2005): Hegel's periodization is very nearly mirrored by Schmitz, appears more attenuated in Webster, and is still detectable in Greer and Lewis.¹⁸ It fades in more recent, more fully global,

¹⁶ On Joachim de Fiore (1135–1202) and his influence on Pietism, Swabia, and Hegel, see Magee 2001: 236–47.

¹⁷ On the *translatio imperii*, see Goetz 1958 and Wilson 2017: 38–40.

¹⁸ Like Hegel, Schmitz (1807–90) rejects as too narrow the focus on Greece and Rome alone; he arranges the 'Asiatic Nations' in very nearly Hegelian order (China, India, Iran, Assyria and Babylonia, Phoenicia, Lydia, Egypt); and he likens human history to the sun, as it advances from east to west, Orient to Occident (1855: 8)—a recurrent image in Webster too (e.g. 1913: 132; 1948: 62–3).

attempts at world history. And it may vanish altogether from the vast vistas of 'Big History' that encompass the evolution of culture, humanity, life, the Earth, and cosmos. Yet these are relatively recent developments. For his part, Hegel's efforts to consolidate seemingly fundamental different periods into a single, intelligible trajectory can be said to epitomize a consensus that endured well into the twentieth century.

Pivotal in Hegel's fourfold periodization are Greece and Rome, but these must also be put in relation to his Oriental and Germanic worlds. Oriental studies were in their infancy, in the West, and from limited early nineteenth-century perspectives, Chinese, Indian, Persian, Arab, and other 'Oriental' societies seemed to have long stagnated in their ancient glories. This *communis opinio* Hegel merely conceptualizes in his 'logical' terms. Hegel's Orient represents the 'substantial', the natural, the first undifferentiated union of universal and particular: peoples from China to Egypt lived in more immediate union with nature and their social wholes, with little sense of subjective individuality, and so what prevailed there were the patriarchal family, theocratic state, sensual or symbolic art, abstractly pantheistic or aniconic religions, and absence of philosophy in the generalizing style of the Greeks. A 'vegetative existence' and general lack of self-awareness makes Hegel's China and India fundamentally unhistorical, for their inability to compose self-reflexive histories ensures that their states cannot progress constitutionally. Therefore it is foreign authors, notably the Greeks, who record the only reliable information about them—an observation that holds also for Hegel's empire-building Persians, the 'first historical people'.¹⁹ Hegel's attempt to do justice to the diversity of 'the Orient' has some strong points: it highlights the dominance of sacred kingship (Chinese emperors, Persian and Hebrew kings, Egyptian pharaohs, Muslim caliphs) and the

¹⁹ Inchoate constitutions and primitive historiography (tedious Chinese court-annals: *LH* 118; inaccurate Indian king-lists: 162–3, 165) reflect the 'vegetative existence' of China and India (173; cf. 165). Subjective mentality underlies objective development, or lack thereof: 'It is because the Hindoos have no History in the form of annals (*historia*) that they have no History in the form of transactions (*res gestae*); that is, no growth expanding into a veritable political condition' (163); instead, Indian history comprises only the 'perpetually varying intrigues and revolts', a perpetually changeless change (165). By contrast, an innovative religion and world-empire qualify Hegel's Persians as the 'first historical people' (173; cf. *EM* §393A), and yet historical knowledge of them is mediated first through *Greek* sources: Hegel draws on the Old Testament (Septuagint), Ctesias, Xenophon, Arrian, Herodotus above all, but not Megasthenes. So too, foreign authors, especially the Greeks, offer the first and/or only reliable information about India (*LH* 163–4) and ancient Egypt (200–1). This privileging of Greek sources may draw inspiration from Kant, who in Proposition 9 of his *Idea for a Universal History* cites Hume to this effect (1991a: 52).

relative lack of Greece's humanistic spirit. On the other hand, though couched in terms of his logical and encyclopedic categories, his views move fairly firmly within the emerging stereotype of an unchanging East, with its vast anonymous multitudes, now slaving for divine emperors and sultans, now being stirred to paroxysms of energy, building vast monuments or conquering vast swathes in mushroom empires that spring up and wither, changing nothing. Here is an 'unhistorical history': just as nature is punctuated by sudden typhoons and catastrophes, so is the Orient convulsed by Hunnish or Mongol hordes who storm across the earth and vanish again, bringing 'the repetition of the same majestic ruin'.²⁰ Now plodding through their customary rounds, now dreaming of a radiant beyond, oscillating between Chinese prose and Indian phantasy, Syrian sensuality and Egyptian agitation, Hegel's Orientals remain bound by the tireless powers of nature, and only their kings are free.

Despite the unfortunate stereotypes, one should not wholly condemn Hegel for blinkered Eurocentrism. Though he dismisses Africa, Siberia, the Americas, Australia, and Polynesia as relatively uninfluential in world-historical terms, he does not *altogether* exclude them from the human story. The historical complexity and importance of Eastern societies, in particular, he makes vigorous efforts to understand, despite limited resources.²¹ Rejecting the new but more parochial *Altertumswissenschaft* of Wolf, who limited 'higher' culture to Greeks and Romans, Hegel follows the then old-fashioned (but now revived) approach of Creuzer and biblical scholars to situate the Greeks and Romans in broader world-historical relations.²² Hegel's specific theories of Egyptian influence on Greek art, religion, and philosophy are somewhat idiosyncratic; his rough parallels

²⁰ 'Unhistorical history': *LH* 105. Repetition of ruin: 106. Hegel's language may echo Gibbon's treatment of Attila's rainshower-empire, and be itself echoed in Marx's economic explanation of the 'unchangeableness of Asiatic societies, an unchangeableness in such striking contrast with the constant dissolution and refounding of Asiatic states' (*Capital* XIV.4).

²¹ According to Gans, Hegel's first series of lectures on world-history 'devoted a full third of his time to the Introduction and to China', and it was not until his last 1830–1 series that he 'came to treat somewhat more largely of the Middle Ages and the Modern Time' (cited in Hoffheimer 1995: 104–5). Roughly a quarter (114 pages out of 457) of Sibree's edition is still given to the Oriental world—with about an eighth each to the Greek (53 pages) and Roman (62), and a quarter to the Germanic world (117, with 46 for 'Modern Times').

²² In classical scholarship Creuzer's broader framework has been revived notably in studies of the 'Orientalizing revolution' (Burkert 1992; cf. Gunter 2009, West 2001, O. Murray 1993, Poulsen 1912 et al.; cf. Feldman and Richardson 1996 for an invaluable anthology of Creuzer's predecessors and contemporaries). Hegel's own broad-mindedness is being rediscovered as an inspiration for future endeavours in art history (Squire 2018; cf. Houlgate 2000) and comparative religion (Stewart 2018: 300–4), among other fields.

between Greece and India, Rome and China, Rome and Persia are interesting but embryonic.²³ Yet his thesis that Greece inherited and developed the cultural resources of the Orient has passed into orthodoxy and been deepened in myriad ways. In all this, Hegel is an important early advocate of the postulate that the Greek and Roman pasts cannot be fully understood without understanding *their* pasts in Egypt, the Levant, Persia, and ideally even India or Africa.

Hegel himself explores the Greeks' past with fleeting suggestions about how artistic, religious, and proto-philosophical material from the Orient was moulded by the Hellenes' 'sculptural' spirit into resonant, aesthetic unities. At the same time, he adopts the historicist view that the Greek world can be understood wholly on its own terms.²⁴ The beautiful Aegean, with its islands, broken landscape, and constellation of independent cities, fostered a greater subjectivity among the Greeks, so that their art, anthropomorphic gods, and universalizing thought elevated them above the Orient's naturalism. Despite their keener self-awareness, however, Hegel's Homeric and Classical Greeks still lived in 'ideal' harmony with their natural and social homes. Theirs was 'the beautiful middle' between natural immediacy and spiritual reflection, symbolism and romanticism, the Orient and Roman Christianity, and in this beautiful space they cultivated themselves as the people of art *par excellence*: their athletic bodies, customs, and *poleis* were beautiful; their typical constitution was an aesthetic democracy, their gods attractive archetypes of what humans should be; and even their unsystematic thinkers and original historians were artists in their genres, producing works of genius that express the human spirit itself with a spontaneous insight, lawful yet unbound by rigid rules or excessive self-reflection. This 'classic' balance could not last. The anthropomorphic *Kunstreligion* of sculpture and poetry itself inaugurated a new subjectivity, and as it was deepened by the sceptical elements in Sophistic and Socratic philosophies, introduced a note

²³ *Greece and India* (LH 113, 223): Hinduism as the 'Religion of *Phantasie*' (LR 2.316–35) anticipates Greek 'thinking phantasy', though the latter shows more rational intuition in giving nature's divine 'powers' their proper human form. *Rome and China*: a quasi-Stoic ideal of the wise man (LH 71), the prose of life (139), the superstitions and imperial cult (131–2, 160) are proto-Roman elements in Hegel's China. *Rome and Persia*, briefly compared as pluralistic empires united under a monarch: LH 113, 278. *Greece and China*: a juxtaposition overlooked by Hegel but made increasingly (e.g. Shankman and Durrant 2000, Lloyd and Sivin 2002, Tanner 2009, Beecroft 2010, Zhou 2010. So too *Greece–India* (Seaford 2017) and *Rome–China* (Gizewski 1994, Mutschler and Mittag 2009, Scheidel 2009 and 2015) attract ever more interest. Seminal for such cross-cultural comparisons is Jaspers' concept of the 'Axial Age', itself critical of Hegel's achievement (1953).

²⁴ E.g. LP 1.149–51, LH 237.

of alienation. As the thinking 'unit' stood aloof from the old 'poetic' harmony with nature and society, Greek art and religion relinquished their vitality. The *polis* declined. Internecine war, then Macedonian force did the rest. Alexander looked to the Persian and even Indian east, but his work augured the unhappy dualisms of the rising Roman west.²⁵

The principle of Hegel's Rome was a deep split between universal order and particular self. Founded by a band of robbers, held together by obedience to its war-leader's commands, Rome was ever characterized by a rift between the state and individual, 'useful' pantheon and self-interested worshipper, substantial order and free subject. In the certainty of property rights, each citizen had an inkling of his absolutely free subjectivity. Yet these legal persons were atomized and alienated, held together not by Oriental instinct or Greek custom, but by obedience to the kings, the patricians and aristocracy, the law, the emperor—in all cases, to the power of the state. It was by force too that Rome extended its rule over the disparate cities, lands, and gods of the *orbis terrarum*. This unhappy situation saw the wholesale plundering of Greek art, mythology, and philosophy, yet it also sharpened the specifically Roman genius for satire, and its penchant for Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Scepticism, which deepened the external-internal divide into the alienation of a world-weariness. This 'unhappy consciousness' was perpetuated in early Christianity, which elevated Roman dualities into a cultural diarchy (*imperium-sacerdotium*) and an ontological dualism (world-God). But the despair of schizophrenic Rome was, paradoxically, the ground for its own deliverance. Not in Augustus, but in Christ it gained its ultimate purpose and salvation. Over the coming centuries, the spirit of Christian harmony would flower into the increasingly free culture of medieval Christendom and modern Europe. To that world Rome, as the synthesis of Oriental and Greek civilizations, would bequeath its rich legacy—its law, relics or copies of Greek art and philosophy, and most of all, Roman Catholicism.²⁶

This spiritual legacy would animate the Germanic world of Alemanni, Goths, Franks, Angles, Vandals, Langobards, and others far more than it would the medieval Byzantine backwater. More varied, more daring, more self-assured than any previous epoch, Germanic Europe would in the

²⁵ Apart from remarks on Alexandria as a centre for inferior, erudite art and for rising Neoplatonism, Hegel passes by 'the Hellenistic'.

²⁶ This sense of Rome as synthesis of all antiquities reappears in e.g. Barker 1923: 45, Dudley 1960: 10 ('Into this world-wide empire [of Rome] the entire cultural heritage of the ancient world—Greek, Oriental, Semitic, West European—was absorbed and diffused').

Lutheran Reformation overcome the 'Roman' duality of *sacerdotium* and *imperium*, and foster a new universalism in the hearts of 'true' believers. Confident in its accomplishments and powers, this 'Germanic' modernity turns outwards to conquer the whole world, past and present, in thought and therefore, increasingly, in fact. Yet even as it is buoyed by an ebullient self-confidence all its own, Hegel's modernity revisits three main divisions of the ancient world: Charlemagne's kingdom harks back to the Persian Empire (loose political unity), Lutheran Germany to Periclean Greece (increasing subjective freedom), and the contemporary present to the Roman world (alienation, prose, utility).²⁷ The ties may be very tenuous, but again the motivating principle remains epistemologically seductive: Greece and Rome must be understood in relation to the whole of history, both their 'Oriental' pasts and 'Germanic' futures.

6.3. Hegel's Mediterranean, Earth, Big History, and Cosmic Mind

'The true is the whole' has yet further implications in Hegel's Janus-faced system, as it looks back to ancient precedents and forward to later developments. The unity of mankind is captured for Hegel in the metaphor of history as a single life-span: African and Oriental childhood, Greek youth, Roman manhood, Germanic maturity. This postulate of human unity reappears in Braudel's Mediterranean as perhaps *the* focal point of world-history: indeed, 'the Mediterranean' has become a metaphor for the *single* nexus of historical events.²⁸ The holistic sense of universal interconnection runs even deeper in Hegel's monism of Being—an ontological and logical truth that comes to focus in his reflections on the sea. In Hegel's logical terms, the sea is the 'universal element', the crossroads and highway which binds more than separates, which stimulates enterprise, transforms greed into productive work, creates commercial classes, and is history's 'chief means of culture'.²⁹ The sea has bound Asia Minor to Greece, Normandy

²⁷ LH 344–5.

²⁸ Life-stages: LH 91 (Africa), 105 (Orient), 223 (Greece), 107 (Rome), and 108–9 (German world). The metaphor used by Bacon (*antiquitas saeculi, juvenus mundi*) and others (Gooch 1913: 8–9) might be detected as early as Plato *Timaeus* 22b. Braudel mentions Hegel once (2002: 178); Tibebu connects them fleetingly (2011: 81, 299).

²⁹ 'Chief means': PR §247R. Sea binds: LH 87, 90–1. Hegel's reflections are richer than those of Kant concerning commerce as a mechanism for fostering transnational peace, and than the general Romantic association of the sea with liberty (e.g. Wordsworth's 'Thought of a Briton on

to England, Denmark to Norway, Sweden to Finland, and if the start of the modern world is symbolized by Columbus's voyages realizing the Earth as a single, self-enclosed globe, it is more distantly prefigured in the historical centrality of the Mediterranean.

This for Hegel is literally the 'Middle Sea' (*Mittelmeer*), situated at the centre of the world and its history, as it joins and 'mediates' three continents (Africa, Asia, and Europe) and all four world-historical periods.³⁰ The metaphor of middles and mediation (*Vermittlung*) runs through Hegel's system from the logical copula to Christ, but many of his significant world-historical mediations are focused on the Mediterranean. This is the sea that mediates between the substantial societies of the Orient (culminating in Egypt) and the subjective ones of Germanic Europe, with the Greek and Roman republics occupying the middle position geographically and culturally: between Oriental despotism and Germanic monarchy are the partially free republics of antiquity; between Oriental symbolism and Christian romanticism is the 'beautiful middle' of Classical art; between nature deities and Christ's immanence are the Greek Olympian 'powers' and Roman divinized purposes; between immersion in nature and concrete mastery of it are the Greek philosophers' abstract universals, the Romans' discipline and labour. Thus, of the many peoples around this most 'universal' sea, the most significant for Hegel are surely the Greeks and Romans. The Egyptians were not a seagoing people, and the late Oriental world (i.e. Persian Empire) opened to the sea only via the Phoenician trading cities. But the Greeks—living an 'amphibious existence', scattered across islands and headlands—were a people utterly defined by the Mediterranean.³¹ The sea both separated and united their cities, inspiring that spontaneous fusion of particularity and universality that was sublimated and objectified in their 'beautiful' way of life. Hegel's Romans are faced with the opposite situation: Italy has no one

the Subjugation of Switzerland'). On the other hand, he does not intuit in the sea 'the turbid ebb and flow of human misery' (with Arnold's Sophocles in 'Dover Beach'), or the transcendent possibilities in Plato's 'sea of beauty' (*Symposium* 210d4), or Melville's 'ungraspable phantom', or Freud's 'oceanic feeling'. He does not share the widespread ancient distrust of the 'corrupting sea' (Holden and Purcell 2000), or the primeval awe before it as a divine 'power' that can crush all human heroism.

³⁰ The 'heart of the Old World', the Mediterranean is indeed the '*media terra* of all civilization' (LH 307), without which 'the History of the World could not be conceived: it would be like ancient Rome or Athens without the forum, where all the life of the city came together' (87).

³¹ LH 227; cf. Plato's Greeks, living around the sea like frogs 'around a log' (*Phaedo* 109a9–b4)—an image often evoked in Greek studies.

natural centre, and so after emerging from their inland hills, they could expand only by physical force—an expedient that determined the spirit of their state and empire. Force transformed the Mediterranean into the Roman sea (*mare nostrum*) and made them, in their different way, a people of 'Mediterranean' universality.³²

In all this, Hegel gives his own idealistic variation on the ancient, and modern, notion of geographical determinism. The evocative conclusion of Herodotus' *Histories*—'out of soft lands there tend to arise soft peoples'—is an ancient trope taken up in the modern proverb and historiographical postulate, 'geography is destiny'.³³ Hegel's world history begins, rather conventionally, with a survey of the 'Geographical Basis of History'. In terms of the *EPS* categories, Nature is the ground of Spirit: Spirit is not the passive effect of Nature but actively sublates it into its own all-inclusive reality. The Ionian climate (Hegel's example) is not an *external* cause of Homer's epics, and in general, geographical conditions are sublimated in national character and its works.³⁴ Unchanging, landlocked plains and river valleys are echoed in the changelessness of Oriental despotisms; Ionia and the Aegean, with their free interplay of sea, sky, and land, are sublimated in the beautiful Greek democracies; the vast diversity of Italian landscapes reappears in the pluralism of the vast Roman empire, held together by sheer force of will. In this, Hegel's objective idealism turns materialistic determinism on its head: the 'ideas' implicit in a landscape become explicit in cultural forms, and far from being reducible to natural conditions, free spirit incorporates them as moments of itself; correspondingly, geographical science becomes an element in the higher discipline of historiography. Hegel's inversion of a geographical determinism has much modern resonance: in the terms of Fichtean idealism, all the Earth becomes material for human making, to be sublimated in higher syntheses of Spirit; in terms of later evolutionary approaches, early human beings are passively *shaped* by

³² Italian peninsula, with no unifying centre, never united again after Roman rule: *LH* 280, 431.

³³ Herodotus: 9.122, cf. 1.142, 3.106 (Greece, especially Ionia, has the most beautiful climate). Hippocrates: *Airs, Waters, Places* 12, 23. Aristotle: *Politics* 1327b23–31; cf. Isocrates *Panathenaicus* 163. Virgil: *Georgics* 2.167–76 (among other *laudes Italiae*). Jared Diamond is one recent proponent of geographical determinism.

³⁴ Ionia: *SL* 496, *LH* 80. Bosanquet elaborates the idea: 'Undoubtedly man lives the life of his planet, his climate, and his locality, and *is the utterance, so to speak of the conditions* under which his race and his nation have evolved' (1965 [1899]: 31); this Hegelian unity of form (i.e. social institutions) and matter (i.e. climate, race, diet) he traces to Plato and Aristotle (31–4).

their natural environment but through cultural advance gain increasing power to *shape* it actively to their will.

This brings us to Hegel's final, Janus-faced concept. It has been argued that Hegel's time was one of transition, between the gradual ebbing of Christian faith and the emergence of a new 'creed' in scientific evolution.³⁵ This liminality may pervade Hegel's system also, as it professes to justify Lutheran Christianity—by demonstrating the 'evolution' of religions and the Concept. For the elements of this logico-historical 'unfolding', Hegel looks firmly to the past, but later readers can equally look on him as a precursor of the more Darwinian idea of temporal evolution. This idea underlies what has become perhaps *the* grand narrative, *the* myth constitutive of the 'modern mind', its most universal history and *credo*: the idea that the cosmos, as it evolves from matter to mind, has a history embracing the micro-histories of the Earth, life, man, and all human complexities. Following the scientific orthodoxy of his time, Hegel limits history proper to the human realm, for 'in Nature there happens "nothing new under the sun"', only ever-repeating cycles.³⁶ Yet if there is no natural history proper (and no history of naturalistic peoples, whether pre-literate or Oriental), there is in Hegelian Nature a logical progression from simple to complex, a dynamic self-manifestation of the timeless Concept. His whole framework, therefore, is 'evolutionary' in the sense of exploring the 'unfolding' of a single, articulated reality. One might epitomize it as mediating between Aristotle and Darwin; between a vastly expanded Porphyrean concept-tree, and the ramifying branches of evolutionary diagrams; between ancient images of Earth as the universal Mother, and the neo-Spinozistic materialism of Lovelock's Gaia; between Spirit as a self-shaping, Greek-style 'sculptor', and the Heraclitean cosmos as a solitary, intelligible and self-causing fire.³⁷ Again, between timeless verities and historical events, Hegel mediates between the older tradition of God-centred world-histories, and more modern, secular grand narratives.³⁸ Even as Hegel laboured to make

³⁵ Watson 2010.

³⁶ LH 54.

³⁷ Earth as primary organism: EN §338; cf. §339A ('the universal individual' though not a 'living subject'); cf. Hesiod *Theogony* 117, Sophocles *Antigone* 338 ('the undying, unwearied Earth'). Spirit as artist: LA 1.79 (*der Geist als Künstlerischer sich das Bewußtsein von sich selber gibt*). Heraclitus: D.-K. B30.

³⁸ Drawing on a genre that runs from Gibbon's *Outlines of the History of the World* (1771) and Vico's *New Science* (1725) back to Bible-based histories by Bossuet (1681), Fleury (1640–1723) and ultimately Orosius' *Histories*, Augustine's *City of God*, and Eusebius' *Chronicle* and *Ecclesiastical History*, Hegel's LH is God-centred in a somewhat cosmopolitan way: each people is defined by its own *Geist*, that is, its way of embodying *Geist* itself, and so history is 'a series of conceptions of the Eternal' (EM §384A); cf. von der Luft 1984. God's

his system ever more concrete and complete, particularly indebted to Greek art and philosophy, and the 'determinate' religions of antiquity, new events were already making some of his framework seem somewhat outmoded. The year of his death (1831) might be given revolutionary symbolism on a par with that of 1776: for in 1831, Faraday discovered electric currents, James Clerk Maxwell was born, de Tocqueville visited democratic America, while shortly before and after Lobachevsky (1829) and Bolyai (1832) published on non-Euclidean geometries, Cuvier died (1832), Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830–3) was published—and read, in instalments, by Darwin as he set out on the HMS Beagle's second voyage of exploration (1831–6). Such events ultimately helped to bolster the sense of the deep interconnect-edness of nature, culture, and abstract thought. If so, the Hegelian spirit did not die in 1831. His attempt at a holistic world history, set within the environs of a comprehensive encyclopedia, has at least the foreshadowings of 'Big History'. The spectre of a grand unified theory of everything haunts scientific imaginations still.³⁹

Before such cosmic immensities, the little affairs of Greece and Rome seem to shrink to insignificance. Yet when Hegel thinks about the ultimate reality, the 'divine', self-mediating cosmic whole that is at once God and Nature, the ancient world is not erased. His version of historical evolution seems positively Lamarckian, in this sense: the present is the *Aufhebung* of the past; forms of the state, art, religion, philosophy, and history form integrated series, whose elements preserve and go beyond their predecessors; in the cumulative progress of Spirit, such innovations as writing, law, subjective art, religious anthropomorphism, systematic thought are, once acquired, never fully lost; what once exercised geniuses is in later ages child's play; and while finite cultural artefacts like Greek sculptures may fracture, over time the expansive modern mind will recover their essence in scientific thought, demonstrating how for the infinite Concept 'nothing in the past is lost'.⁴⁰ Indeed, this relentless progress seems to point to the total

particular providence remained a major preoccupation of Droysen, Ranke (e.g. *World History* (1880–6)) and others, but fades from much twentieth-century historiography. For a survey of modern world-histories, see Stuchtey and Fuchs 2003; cf. Burrow 2009: 500–9.

³⁹ For 'Big History', see Christian 2011.

⁴⁰ Gibbon voices the Enlightenment confidence in cumulative progress: 'Since the first discovery of the arts, war, commerce, and religious zeal have diffused among the savages of the Old and New World these inestimable gifts: they have been successively propagated; they can never be lost' (1994, Chapter 38 *ad fin.*). This faith is generalized in Hegel's conception of philosophical history: it deals 'with the eternally present. Nothing in the past is lost for it, for the

convergence of man and divinity: an Omega-point that haunted ancient art, religion, and philosophy was made first explicit in the Incarnation, and is coming now into the fullness of time. In the longest *durée*, history sees human beings develop from natural substance to spiritual subjectivity, from near animality to approximate divinity. In this regard, a tenuous line can be drawn from Hegel to Teilhard de Chardin to Frank Tipler. Other faint lines could be drawn between Hegel and those closet Spinozists who speculate that reality is one, and indeed an *ideal* one: that the cosmos is a single, self-developing whole (Rosen); that in a participatory cosmos evolving from information to things, 'bit becomes it' (Wheeler); that all is number, or more specifically, information, and hence expressible in set-theoretic terms as moments of a single, timeless 'mindscape' (Rucker); that mathematical, physical, and mental 'worlds' are mutually supporting (Penrose), in a way analogous to Hegel's 'circular' triad of Logic, Nature, and Spirit.⁴¹

If such comparisons are at least partially valid, then Hegel is indeed a Janus-like figure who looks backward and forward, to what is at once past and future, old and new. With Neoplatonists, de Chardin, Rucker, and others, Hegel regards phenomena as thoughts in the mind of 'God'—*noëta* of the cosmic *nous*, or rather, *as* Mind itself, miniature totalities shaping and shaped by the dynamic Totality. Or, Hegel regards reality as a 'cosmotheandric' whole, where cosmic substance evolves into the divine subjectivity of the enlightened mind.⁴² Man as microcosm, *logos*, Christ, nature become self-conscious: it is difficult to neatly separate the 'living' from the 'dead' in this kernel of the Hegelian system. Many literal details of his historical narratives may be 'dead', not to be repeated in the exact letter given them by Hegel—and yet, the 'spirit' of his idealism may well resurrect in unexpected new forms, whether Oakeshott's politics, Squire's 'art of the body', Roche's genre theory, Pannikar's cosmotheandricism, or Penrose's 'circular' cosmology.

Idea is ever present . . . The grades which Spirit seems to have left behind it, it still possesses in the depths of its present' (*LH* 79, cf. *LP* 1.38–9 ('Temple of Memory') and 1.297–8 (as if executing the judgment of history's world-court, fate preserves 'what is best').

⁴¹ S.M. Rosen: 2008. Wheeler: 1990. Rucker 1987, 1995 (Rucker recalls jocularly that he is a great-great-great-grandson of Hegel). Penrose: 'The physical world grounds the mental world, which in turn grounds the mathematical world and the mathematical world is the ground of the physical world and so on around the circle' (1994: 87).

⁴² Hodgson uses Panikkar's 'cosmotheandric whole' (Panikkar 1993) to epitomize Hegelian Spirit as that which 'encompasses and constitutes all that is, *cosmos* and *anthropos* as well as *theos*' (1997: 17; cf. 2005: 33). The approach bears some similarity to the ideal Stoic identity of sage, cosmos, and God.

6.4. The Living and the Dead: Between Antiquity and Modernity

Hegel does not like to prophesy, for only the present and past are actual and knowable. Yet he does make conclusions regarding present modernity that amount to prophecies about its future state: the proclaimed end of political, artistic, religious, and philosophical histories become moments in the larger prophetic thesis that history itself has come to fulfilment in modern times. It is as if all events of fundamental significance have happened, and the end of world-history coincides with the birth of the philosophical history of the world: the long ‘day’ of providential history ends as the owl of Minerva preens itself for flight. One may smile at the very notion of an ‘end’ of history, but should not forget how very liminal the times seemed to many of Hegel’s contemporaries, traumatized or enthused by the sense that the old was dying, that something new and definitive was coming to birth. Contemplating the ruins of the Forum, an optimist like Gibbon concludes that Rome’s decline and fall will not be repeated in modern Europe, elevated by its practical rationality above any new waves of ‘superstition’ or ‘barbarism’. For Hegel, too, the perfected rationality of modern culture makes it strong, even invulnerable to decay: the rational and actual have converged, and as it self-consciously absorbs the essential insights of all histories, Europe becomes ‘infinite’ in spiritual resources.

In the confidence of such judgments, Hegel stakes his own patch on the much-contested ground of what ‘modernity’ is, should be, or will be. The modern world has been regarded as the best of times—or the worst of times; as a time of revolutionary change and inevitable progress—or of the melancholy, long withdrawal of traditions and faith; a time of discovery, expansion, and brave new worlds—or of disenchantment, alienation, and *ennui*; a time of enlightened power, as man morphs from idiotic brute to scientific god—or of technological *katabasis* into mines, mills, and industrialized killing; a time of liberation—or totalitarian control; of brotherhood and synthesis—or fragmentation and difference; of confidence and self-belief—or cynicism and nihilistic despair.⁴³ As an idealist, Hegel does not emphasize

⁴³ Theories about modernity, modernism, and related concepts are (to paraphrase Homer) as numberless as leaves in season, among philosophers (e.g. Rosen 1989, Toulmin 1992, Dupré 2013), sociologists (Berman 1988, Stark 2015, Giddens 1991, Wagner 2012), theologians (Hanby 2003)—even classicists (Morley 2009, Leonard 2015). In Pippin 1997 and Billings

the technological causes or effects of scientific advance, preferring to ground both in the deeper, 'spiritual' temper of a civilization. Nevertheless, in each of the dichotomies above, he tends buoyantly towards the optimistic option, while acknowledging 'negativity' as a real and indeed necessary other. For Hegel, modernity is defined by national states that balance maximal freedom with maximal social integration; by the fading of aesthetic immediacy and deepening of Christian and Romantic interiority; by a prosaic, matter-of-fact attitude as well as a scepticism before which 'all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned'. Beyond all dualisms, he affirms higher integrations in reason (*Vernunft*): in the concrete philosophical spirit, everything that was lost is essentially recovered, and all alienations overcome, for the informed mind sees in nature and the seeming monstrosities of past histories a deeper Mind alive and at work. To the mind that knows this Mind, each moment becomes a quasi-sacred revelation, in which it discovers its own infinity marvellously reflected back to itself.

Such speculative (< *speculum*, mirror) thinking defines Hegel's modernity and constitutes his response to Kant's Enlightenment imperative, and indeed to the mind's own 'absolute command'—to 'know thyself'. Hegelian man claims indeed to know himself—without the tutelage of heteronomous authorities.⁴⁴ But the all-inclusive self-reflection of this modern person ensures that for him the past is perennially present. In the mirror of Hegel's modernity would appear the faithful reflections of Germanic, Roman, Greek, as well as Egyptian, Persian, Indian, Chinese, African pasts: in this modernity is synthesized all the human past—but especially the former three moments. In Greece, Spirit is first at home, and self-consciously exhorts itself to 'know itself', in the free spirit of its democratic cities, its humanistic art, anthropomorphic religion, and speculative thinking.⁴⁵ In Rome, the Spirit disciplines itself further by codes of law, labours for mastery, worship of earthly purposes, and painful integrations of empire. From this toil arose Christianity, the 'truth' of Rome's Mediterranean, and the true religious expression of Spirit as integrating *Vernunft*. This Christianity defines 'Germanic' Europe, from the ancient Germanic tribes through to their enlightened Lutheran heirs and *their* less enlightened

2014, post-Kantian idealism becomes definitive of modernity itself, while Houlgate 1987 takes Hegel as anticipating much in that most modern of 'moderns', Nietzsche.

⁴⁴ 'The absolute command of mind': *EM* §377, *LP* 3.7.

⁴⁵ 'Know thyself' was 'the law' for the Greek Spirit: *LH* 220, 319; *LP* 1.32, 1.435.

neighbours in the 'Romanic' South. It is not too paradoxical, therefore, to state that Hegel's modernity is Christian, Roman, and Greek—especially these three, the most significant evolutions of his ancient Mediterranean.

Hegel's modernity leads inevitably to his antiquity, and vice versa. A double sense characterizes this antiquity of Hegel. Most obviously, the antiquity that he propounds is *his*: it reveals much about him and his early nineteenth-century concerns—with political revolution and social atomization, Romanticism, the fate of art and Christianity, the viability of metaphysics and nature of idealism, with the timeless truths of logic and ceaseless evolutions of time, as the Concept creates and subsumes all things and so 'thinks itself'. From these heights, the grammatical pedant in me descends to construe 'Hegel' in the phrase as a subjective genitive—Hegel as *subject*, actively shaping his vision of the ancient Mediterranean. On the other hand, the vision is not *merely* subjective, no merely *a priori* 'construction' of the Hegelian brain, or mere reflection of the preoccupations of his times. Rooted rather in objective sources, informed by great erudition, and enlivened by a synthetic intelligence, 'Hegel's antiquity' may even retain elements of lasting value. Certainly, his ambitions were scholarly and 'scientific', and in this sense 'Hegel' serves also as an objective genitive. He set himself up as a dynamically passive observer, impinged upon by the data itself, an undistorted mirror of what essentially happened. As an encyclopedist who regarded himself as a capable amanuensis of the World-Spirit, as it were, humbly transcribing and finding final systematic form in what many past spirits had wrought and thought before him—Hegel might not disdain my grammatical pedantries: grammar is, after all, the first liberal art, and for Hegel a propaedeutic to his ontological logic.

But to claim (paraphrasing Conrad) that all of antiquity went into the making of Hegel's antiquity would be a mistake. Despite his pretensions to sum up the *whole* past, he did not. Many aspects of Greek and Roman antiquity were not fully understood by Hegel, or neglected, or ignored, or not known, or as yet undiscovered. It is his great virtue that he approached the past with such an effort at historical fidelity and thoroughness, and his knowledge and understanding remain impressive; his evolutionary narrative from natural substance to spiritual subject remains vitally resonant, as does the search for a monistic 'theory of everything'. Yet if his accomplishment should not be superficially belittled, neither should it be idolized. The dominant sense of 'Hegel's antiquity', then, is that antiquity remained an object external to Hegel's subjective comprehension. Antiquity in its totality eludes his grasp, and despite the seductive lure of his idealism, subject and

object are not in Hegel united as they may well be in an Absolute Mind. His objective knowledge was limited, his subjective biases not fully overcome. If, then, his absolute idealism claims to be the perennial philosophy, it must remain, at least with regard to antiquity, an unfinished synthesis. His encyclopedic work does not enfold all the past into a single Concept of concepts, book of books, and key to all histories.

Our own time may be one of converging opposites—ever greater globalization and unification, combined with ever greater atomization and isolation, both made possible by our technological ‘spirit’.⁴⁶ If the sciences yearn for a theory of everything that can locate each nanoparticle within the evolutionary whole, humanistic studies still remain somewhat in thrall to a postmodern creed of sheer diversity: perspective is all, difference indelible, with no privileged vantage-point on reality, no objectivity, no ‘truth’ except perhaps if one speaks of multiple ‘truths’. For under close examination, the general seems inevitably to fissure into an indefinite plurality, and these pluralities into yet more, so that no final categories seem possible, nothing definitive, but all remains negotiable and in flux. According to this nominalist, Heraclitean perspective, Hegel suffered under a vast illusion—and not a benign one, for in certain circles, he has been made into *the* ogre of totalitarian reason, a Cyclops who sees only *one* thing, and so (predictably) a putative ancestor of Fascism and Stalinism alike. Certainly as a monist he stresses unity, yet his lectures are wondrously diverse, and as much as Aristotle he separates, differentiates, defines, making negation the very principle by which reality is individuated: this is *not* that, lyric is *not* epic, philosophy is *not* religion, Rome is *not* Greece. For present-day scholars, his forays into their *specific* fields may seem precipitous. Indeed, language of *the* Greek or *the* Roman spirits and worlds, let alone of their deeper unity in the World-Spirit, seems to waft in from another era. Like Plato’s Forms, such universals sound so rustic in sophisticated company—and yet, like Horace’s nature, they always make their rough way back.⁴⁷ Specialized studies may tend to shy away from speaking of ‘antiquity’ or ‘modernity’ in the essentializing singular, and prefer broader and seemingly more tolerant plurals like classical pasts, ancient worlds, Greek religions, Roman religions, Roman identities, diverse Platonisms, Enlightenments, and Romanticisms: here Boas’s discussion

⁴⁶ Shades of Hegelian political dialectic linger in sociological studies of polarities of liberty/discipline (Wagner 1994), regulation/emancipation (Santos 1995) and in Bauman’s statement that ‘order and chaos are *modern* twins’ (1991: 4).

⁴⁷ *Naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret*: Horace *Epistles* 1.10.24.

of Greek pluralism, and attack on 'superstitious' *Geistesgeschichte* remains eloquent.⁴⁸ And yet, because universals are conceptually necessary to give unity of focus, books continue to be written, willy-nilly, about *the* Greeks, *the* Roman character, *the* German genius, *the* idea of modernity, or *the* modern mind.⁴⁹ Does not the ghost of Hegel's *Geist* hover here still?

'What is living and what is dead in the philosophy of Hegel' is a question that has haunted Hegel specialists for over a century. Hegel himself was ecumenical in his admiration of the dead: like Zeno he 'took on the colour of the dead' as he composed his thoughts, honouring the shades of Homer, Pindar, Pheidias, Sophocles, Pericles, Aristophanes, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Alexander, Polybius, the *populus Romanus* (with their harsh discipline and *religio*), Livy, Caesar, Horace, Augustus, Tacitus, Juvenal, Plotinus, Justinian, and so many others, giving each a vital niche in the Temple of Memory. In an age of revolutionary unbelief, he insisted on the truth of Christianity, that ancient faith, and as a believer himself in the resurrected Christ (or at least in the self-incarnating Spirit), Hegel, like Epicurus, thinks that death is nothing to *us*—nothing to the thinking mind that knows its own infinity. It would seem profoundly contrary to Hegel's spirit, therefore, to dissect his corpus for usable parts, and like some new Dr Frankenstein assemble novel, even more ghastly systems out of the old. For better or worse, this book will not revive Hegel's antiquity as a living whole. But if it has succeeded in showing how the 'dead' past takes on a measure of new life in Hegel's published works and lectures—how long-departed Greeks and Romans speak again in Hegel's modern German, at least when he gives them 'cloven tongues' and fills them with his own energy—I will be content.

⁴⁸ Boas 1948: 326. Classical pasts: Porter 2005, Dyson 2006. Ancient worlds: Scott 2016. Greek religions: Price 1999, but see rebuttals by Burkert (1985: 8) and Bremer (1994: 1). Roman religions: Beard, North, and Price 1998. Platonisms: Corrigan and Turner 2007. Enlightenments, French, Scottish, German, etc: Outram 1995: 1–14, Himmelfarb 2005. Romanticisms: Lovejoy 1924, Honour 1979: 11–15. Modernities: P.J. Taylor 1999, Leonard 2015, Wagner 2012: 28–63.

⁴⁹ 'Modern mind': P. Watson 2001. Idea of modernity: Billings and Leonard 2015. 'German genius': P. Watson 2010. Roman character: MacMullen 2011, cf. L.P. Wilkinson 1975. 'The Roman Spirit': Grenier 2013 [1926]. 'The Greeks': Cartledge 1993. For Cartledge, there *were* 'general Greek attitudes or beliefs... a Greek mindset or "mentality" (if that term may be permitted)' (9), namely a 'chimerical' mind in 'all its often contradictory complexity' (9–10). Assmann 1996 and Momigliano 1977: 295–306, among others, hark back critically to Burckhardt's practice of *Geistesgeschichte*—but behind Burckhardt is Hegel. He *did* conceptualize *Kulturgeschichte* as the study of a culture (i.e. 'national spirit') in its concrete universality: its structural features (U) are conceptualized in hindsight after they develop diachronically through specific persons, customs, and events (P), and so give the culture its individuality—an evolving unity-in-diversity, a specific *Geist* in all its 'contradictory complexity'.

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